ESSAYS OF RICHARD STEELE



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RICHARD STEELE

SELECTED AND EDITED

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INTRODUCTION

WHEN, having refreshed our memories by a reperusal of the *Essays of Addison* in an earlier volume of this series, we read the delightful 'lucubrations,' as their author quaintly styles them, in the present little volume, it is but just to remember that it was Richard Steele who gave to Addison the opportunity to speak those words of wit and wisdom which have charmed many generations of English readers in the pages of the *Tatler*, *Spectator*, and *Guardian*. To Isaac Bickerstaff belongs, exclusively, the honour of having initiated that form of periodical literature which so admirably suited the genius of his great collaborator; and although the latter maintains more effectively and consistently a higher level of style and exhibits a greater variety of subject than does the friend who so generously acknowledged his superiority, we can say with all truth that there is many an essay from Steele's pen which more than equals Addison at his best, and many also which are possessed of a peculiar charm —the charm of spontaneity and artless enthusiasm— which we sometimes miss in the more finely wrought and more scholarly essays of the greater writer.

It is inevitable that the close relationship of the two men, both in their lives and work, should suggest comparison ; but it can be safely instituted without disparaging, as has too often been the case, the claims of the one with the object of magnifying those of the other. It is strange that Steele, of all men, should have suffered in this way, for he was always ready, with a chivalry and generosity by no means common in the world of letters, to sink his own claims in the presence of the friend to whom, as he asserts over and over again, he owed so much. But with a fuller knowledge of Steele's life and labours, a higher appreciation of his character and of his work has come, and the misrepresentations of Lord Macaulay and the picturesque inaccuracies of Thackeray may be forgiven and forgotten. For, indeed, of the writers of the so-called Augustan Period, there is not one who speaks so straight from the heart, nor one who wins our affections so truly, as does Richard Steele. His delightful abandonment, his genial and buoyant spirit, his transparent sincerity, his unaffected chivalry, and his consistent advocacy of what is pure and good, combine to make him the pleasantest and most wholesome of companions. With all his faults, venial for the most part because they spring from an excess of good qualities, he will always be a most attractive personality to numbers of readers who, without abating one jot of their admiration for Addison, yet feel sometimes that the ethical superiority of the one chills, where the less disciplined humanity of the other warms the heart. If fidelity to friends, if generous acknowledgment of services rendered, if a readiness to make every reparation for injury unwittingly done—and Steele never

wittingly offended—entitle a man to be called good, then Steele may indeed claim that high designation.

As so many new facts in Steele's life have of recent years come to light, it may not be amiss to embody them in a brief outline of his strenuous and vigorous career. Although there are not a few features of his character which may be attributed to his Irish origin, it is remarkable that there is not a trace in his writings of what it is nowadays the fashion to call the Celtic spirit; nor indeed in those of any of the Irishmen who have taken a high place in the bead-roll of the great English writers. It would seem as if it were not to be in the land of its birth that Irish genius was to find inspiration; but Ireland in the eighteenth century was by no means a place to develop the Celtic or indeed any other worthy spirit.

The few landmarks associated with the early years of the founder of *The Tatler* can now no longer be indicated. The little Dublin church of St. Bride, in which Richard Steele, the son of Richard Steele, a Dublin attorney, was baptized in 1672, has now been swept away; and the country house which his father owned at Monkstown, County Dublin, within sight of the castle in which Ludlow lived in the previous generation, can no longer be identified.

Although the fact of Steele's Irish origin was a subject for contempt with two or three of his detractors—such as John Dennis and Mrs. Manley—he always referred to his origin and to his country as matters of which he was not ashamed. 'Whoever talks with me,' he asserts on one occasion, 'is speaking to a gentleman born'; and in *The Tatler*, under the name of Isaac Bickerstaff, he declares that, 'My

family, from which I am descended, came originally out of Ireland; this has given me a kind of natural affection for the country!' How differently does Swift view his connection with the city and country of his birth and residence! For him they are 'wretched Dublin, in miserable Ireland'; but then Swift's nature was not that of kindly Steele.

With the events of his early childhood, his connection with Ireland practically ceased; except it be for one of his many curious projects, called 'the Fish-Pool,' a scheme to bring salmon in a tank-boat from Ireland to the London market, which, like too many of Steele's enterprises, failed ignominiously, with the usual serious consequences to his own pocket.

Steele was twice married. His first wife was a widow, a Mrs. Stretch, whose maiden name was Margaret Ford, and whose possessions in Barbadoes supplied her husband with the means to enter upon that unfortunate career of speculation and consequent disaster, of which so much has been made by his enemies. Careful investigation has however shown, that, although frequently in debt, Steele succeeded by hard work and determined effort in paying off his creditors; and we may fairly conclude that before his death his affairs were in such a state that his honest heart was not disturbed by thoughts which could not be otherwise than distressing to him.

After two years of married life his wife died, and within a few months he married Mary or 'Molly' Scurlock, the 'Dear Prue' of a correspondence which is without a parallel in the range of amusing and artless letter-writing. Although an exacting beauty, a born coquette, fashionable, uneconomical, and given

to diplomatic attacks of the 'vapours,' Mistress Mary Scurlock must have been possessed of certain estimable qualities—not very apparent from her letters—to claim such unbounded devotion as she did from her warm-hearted husband; and it is remarkable that her peevishness and perversity never seriously shook Steele's faith in her or in her sex, and never affected the chivalrous and noble spirit which inspired the many excellent essays in which he champions the rights and condemns the wrongs of womankind; and if we would understand the code by which Steele secured domestic bliss under such adverse circumstances, we have but to turn to that admirable essay on 'Matrimonial Happiness,' one of the most finished of his contributions, to learn the secret.

It has been said, not without a touch of exaggeration, that 'Addison would have died with narrow fame had he never had a friendship with Sir Richard Steele.' If it is implied by this that Addison would never have 'found himself,' but for the happy project of *The Tatler* and its two delightful successors, there is certainly an element of truth in the assertion. But the converse is no less true; for it is impossible to think that Steele, brilliant though he was, could, without Addison, have conducted for any length of time, or with any prospect of success, the periodicals which he had started—the casual assistance which he obtained from Swift, Budgell, and a few others, being quite a negligible quantity. It was under the stimulating influence of friendly rivalry that the best of both was given to the world; it is the happy combination of Steele's keen and enthusiastic initiative power, with Addison's scholarly and philosophic charm, that makes

the wonderful collection of Essays attractive even to modern readers. Outside their contributions as co-workers, their literary fame is of the slenderest description; *The Campaign* and *Cato*, *The Procession* and *The Lying Lover*, are not works to win immortality for either one or the other.

Yet one portion of Steele's work, other than journalistic, deserves a passing notice, as indirectly affecting his essays; namely, his contributions to dramatic literature. His claim to be a dramatist, in which capacity he was Addison's superior, rests upon four plays, *The Funeral*, *The Lying Lover*, *The Tender Husband*, and *The Conscious Lovers*, which, if they proved but only fairly successful, brought their author in contact with the theatrical world and gave him that knowledge of the stage which makes him so excellent a critic of stage plays. His ungrudging appreciation of other men's gifts, and his love for the actor and his art, are nowhere more apparent than in the two admirable essays on 'The Death of Estcourt' and 'Betterton the Actor.' It is not perhaps too much to say that even Elia himself has not surpassed him in charm of expression or in critical appreciation in 'The Acting of Munden,' or 'On Some of the Old Actors'; and a modern playgoer may still find delightful sympathy in Steele's thoughts on 'The Pleasures of the Theatre.' It has been remarked that his love for Shakespeare, and his frequent quotation from the plays—not however always accurate—are in marked contrast with Addison, who hardly ever quotes him, and who evidently preferred Milton to the great playwright.

Steele's righteous indignation against the coarser vices of his age forms the subject of many of his most

forcible essays, but of necessity no example of these can be included in this selection, as, at times, his directness of speech would offend the decorum of our day; but the consistency of his practice and of his preaching is well illustrated by the courageous attitude which he assumed towards duelling and gaming. Having, during his early military career, fought with and wounded a Captain Kelly, a fiery countryman of his own, not, however, before he had done everything to dissuade his adversary from a meeting, he ever after in many an essay, as well as in his play of *The Lying Lover*, pointed out the unreasonableness and immorality involved in this method of settling disputes amongst so-called men of honour. And it must be remembered that in his crusade against this practice, and that of gambling, he ran no small risk; so much so, that two of his superior officers, whose sympathies he had completely won by his courage and honesty, placed their swords at his disposal, when his safety was endangered by the mohocks, the swindlers, and the gamesters, whose wrath he had effectually excited.

It is a subject for regret that Steele did not continue to the end to be solely a man of letters; but his impetuous desire to be the knight-errant of his time led him into an arena in which he was by no means an effective fighter. Little by little his later papers became more and more political, until, by *The Crisis*, and in a series of articles in *The Englishman*, advocating the demolition of the fortifications of Dunkirk, he drew down the wrath of the ministry. After a fight, in which he exhibited at least courage and much ingenuity, he was expelled from the House. This occurred in 1714, when he sat as member for

Stockbridge. From this period his life ceases to be particularly interesting; for, although he returned to Parliament in 1722 as member for Wendover—the place for which Edmund Burke afterwards sat—he does not appear to have taken any share in debate, and, so far as his literary career is concerned, it was practically over.

It was a strenuous and, although tempestuous, on the whole a happy life which closed at Carmarthen in 1725, seven years after Lady Steele, his 'dear, little, peevish, beautiful, wise governess,' had been taken from him. There were many to shed tears for kindly, warm-hearted Richard Steele; and what they, doubtless, thought of him has been summed up by one of his fairest modern critics:—'He was unswerving in his loyalty to his friends; he was the most loving of fathers; and, in days when marriage was a lighter tie than now, his devotion to his wife may be called romantic. There have been wiser, stronger, greater men. But many a strong man would have been stronger for a touch of Steele's indulgent sympathy; many a great man has wanted his genuine largeness of heart; many a wise man might learn something from his deep and wide humanity.' And as Steele was a man who wore his heart upon his sleeve, it will not be easy to miss the charm which these good qualities have imparted to the following Essays.

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SPECTATOR CLUB PAPERS

The Members

THE first of our society is a gentleman of Worcestershire, of ancient descent, a baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley. His great-grandfather was inventor of that famous country-dance which is called after him. All who know that shire are very well acquainted with the parts and merits of Sir Roger. He is a gentleman that is very singular in his behaviour, but his singularities proceed from his good sense, and are contradictions to the manners of the world only as he thinks the world is in the wrong. However, this humour creates him no enemies, for he does nothing with sourness or obstinacy; and his being unconfined to modes and forms makes him but the readier and more capable to please and oblige all who know him. When he is in town, he lives in Soho Square. It is said, he keeps himself a bachelor by reason he was crossed in love by a perverse beautiful widow of the next county to him. Before this disappointment, Sir Roger was what you call a fine gentleman, had often supped with my Lord Rochester and Sir George Etheredge, fought a duel upon his first coming to town, and kicked bully Dawson in a public coffee-house for calling him youngster. But being ill-used by the above-mentioned widow, he was

very serious for a year and a half; and though, his temper being naturally jovial, he at last got over it, he grew careless of himself, and never dressed afterward. He continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry humours, he tells us, has been in and out twelve times since he first wore it. . . . He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty; keeps a good house both in town and country; a great lover of mankind; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behaviour, that he is rather beloved than esteemed.

His tenants grow rich, his servants look satisfied, all the young women profess love to him, and the young men are glad of his company. When he comes into a house he calls the servants by their names, and talks all the way upstairs to a visit. I must not omit, that Sir Roger is a justice of the quorum; that he fills the chair at a quarter-session with great abilities, and three months ago gained universal applause, by explaining a passage in the Game Act.

The gentleman next in esteem and authority among us is another bachelor, who is a member of the Inner Temple, a man of great probity, wit, and understanding; but he has chosen his place of residence rather to obey the direction of an old humoursome father, than in pursuit of his own inclinations. He was placed there to study the laws of the land, and is the most learned of any of the house in those of the stage. Aristotle and Longinus are much better understood by him than Littleton or Coke. The father sends up every post questions relating to marriage-articles, leases, and tenures in the neighbourhood; all which

questions he agrees with an attorney to answer and take care of in the lump. He is studying the passions themselves when he should be inquiring into the debates among men which arise from them. He knows the argument of each of the orations of Demosthenes and Tully, but not one case in the reports of our own courts. No one ever took him for a fool; but none, except his intimate friends, know he has a great deal of wit. This turn makes him at once both disinterested and agreeable: as few of his thoughts are drawn from business, they are most of them fit for conversation. His taste of books is a little too just for the age he lives in; he has read all, but approves of very few. His familiarity with the customs, manners, actions, and writings of the ancients, makes him a very delicate observer of what occurs to him in the present world. He is an excellent critic, and the time of the play is his hour of business; exactly at five he passes through New Inn, crosses through Russell Court, and takes a turn at Will's till the play begins; he has his shoes rubbed and his periwig powdered at the barber's as you go into the Rose. It is for the good of the audience when he is at a play, for the actors have an ambition to please him.

The person of next consideration is Sir Andrew Freeport, a merchant of great eminence in the city of London; a person of indefatigable industry, strong reason, and great experience. His notions of trade are noble and generous, and (as every rich man has usually some sly way of jesting, which would make no great figure were he not a rich man) he calls the sea the British Common. He is acquainted with commerce in all its parts, and will tell you that it is a stupid and

barbarous way to extend dominion by arms : for true power is to be got by arts and industry. He will often argue, that if this part of our trade were well cultivated, we should gain from one nation ; and if another, from another. I have heard him prove, that diligence makes more lasting acquisitions than valour, and that sloth has ruined more nations than the sword. He abounds in several frugal maxims, amongst which the greatest favourite is, 'A penny saved is a penny got.' A general trader of good sense is pleasanter company than a general scholar; and Sir Andrew having a natural unaffected eloquence, the perspicuity of his discourse gives the same pleasure that wit would in another man. He has made his fortunes himself; and says that England may be richer than other kingdoms, by as plain methods as he himself is richer than other men ; though at the same time I can say this of him, that there is not a point in the compass, but blows home a ship in which he is an owner.

Next to Sir Andrew in the club-room sits Captain Sentry, a gentleman of great courage, good understanding, but invincible modesty. He is one of those that deserve very well, but are very awkward at putting their talents within the observation of such as should take notice of them. He was some years a captain, and behaved himself with great gallantry in several engagements and at several sieges ; but having a small estate of his own, and being next heir to Sir Roger, he has quitted a way of life in which no man can rise suitably to his merit, who is not something of a courtier as well as a soldier. I have heard him often lament, that in a profession where merit is placed in so conspicuous a view, impudence should

get the better of modesty. When he had talked to this purpose, I never heard him make a sour expression, but frankly confess that he left the world because he was not fit for it. A strict honesty, and an even regular behaviour, are in themselves obstacles to him that must press through crowds, who endeavour at the same end with himself, the favour of a commander. He will, however, in his way of talk excuse generals, for not disposing according to men's desert, or inquiring into it; 'for,' says he, 'that great man who has a mind to help me, has as many to break through to come at me, as I have to come at him.' Therefore he will conclude, that the man who would make a figure, especially in a military way, must get over all false modesty, and assist his patron against the importunity of other pretenders, by a proper assurance in his own vindication. He says it is a civil cowardice to be backward in asserting what you ought to expect, as it is a military fear to be slow in attacking when it is your duty. With this candour does the gentleman speak of himself and others. The same frankness runs through all his conversation. The military part of his life has furnished him with many adventures, in the relation of which he is very agreeable to the company; for he is never overbearing, though accustomed to command men in the utmost degree below him; nor ever too obsequious, from a habit of obeying men highly above him.

But that our society may not appear a set of humourists, unacquainted with the gallantries and pleasures of the age, we have amongst us the gallant Will Honeycomb, a gentleman who, according to his years, should be in the decline of his life, but having

been very careful of his person, and always had a very easy fortune, time has made but very little impression, either by wrinkles on his forehead, or traces on his brain. His person is well turned, and of a good height. He is very ready at that sort of discourse with which men usually entertain women. He has all his life dressed very well, and remembers habits as others do men. He can smile when one speaks to him, and laughs easily. He knows the history of every mode, and can inform you from which of the French king's wenches our wives and daughters had this manner of curling their hair, that way of placing their hoods ; . . . and whose vanity to show her foot made that part of the dress so short in such a year. In a word, all his conversation and knowledge has been in the female world. As other men of his age will take notice to you what such a minister said upon such an occasion, he will tell you, when the Duke of Monmouth danced at court, such a woman was then smitten, another was taken with him at the head of his troop in the Park. In all these important relations, he has ever about the same time received a kind glance, or a blow of a fan from some celebrated beauty, mother of the present Lord Such a-one. . . . This way of talking of his very much enlivens the conversation among us of a more sedate turn ; and I find there is not one of the company, but myself, who rarely speak at all, but speaks of him as of that sort of man, who is usually called a well-bred fine gentleman. To conclude his character, where women are not concerned, he is an honest worthy man.

I cannot tell whether I am to account him whom I am next to speak of, as one of our company ; for he

visits us but seldom; but when he does, it adds to every man else a new enjoyment of himself. He is a clergyman, a very philosophic man, of general learning, great sanctity of life, and the most exact good breeding. He has the misfortune to be of a very weak constitution, and consequently, cannot accept of such cares and business as preferments in his function would oblige him to; he is therefore among divines what a chamber-counsellor is among lawyers. The probity of his mind, and the integrity of his life, create him followers, as being eloquent or loud advances others. He seldom introduces the subject he speaks upon; but we are so far gone in years, that he observes, when he is among us, an earnestness to have him fall on some divine topic, which he always treats with much authority, as one who has no interest in this world, as one who is hastening to the object of all his wishes, and conceives hope from his decays and infirmities. These are my ordinary companions.

[*Spectator*, No. 2.

Mr. Spectator

AN author, when he first appears in the world, is very apt to believe it has nothing to think of but his performances. With a good share of this vanity in my heart, I made it my business these three days to listen after my own fame; and as I have sometimes met with circumstances which did not displease me, I have been encountered by others which gave me much mortification. It is incredible to think how empty I have in this time observed some part of the species to be, what mere blanks they are when they first come abroad in the morning, how utterly they are at a stand until they are set agoing by some paragraph in a newspaper.

Such persons are very acceptable to a young author, for they desire no more in anything but to be new, to be agreeable. If I found consolation among such, I was as much disquieted by the incapacity of others. These are mortals who have a certain curiosity without power of reflection, and perused my papers like spectators rather than readers. But there is so little pleasure in inquiries that so nearly concern ourselves (it being the worst way in the world to fame, to be too anxious about it) that upon the whole I resolved for the future to go on in my ordinary way; and without too much fear or hope about the business of reputation,

to be very careful of the design of my actions, but very negligent of the consequences of them.

It is an endless and frivolous pursuit to act by any other rule, than the care of satisfying our own minds in what we do. One would think a silent man, who concerned himself with no one breathing, should be very little liable to misinterpretations; and yet I remember I was once taken up for a Jesuit, for no other reason but my profound taciturnity. It is from this misfortune, that, to be out of harm's way, I have ever since affected crowds. He who comes into assemblies only to gratify his curiosity, and not to make a figure, enjoys the pleasures of retirement in a more exquisite degree than he possibly could in his closet: the lover, the ambitious, and the miser, are followed thither by a worse crowd than any they can withdraw from. To be exempt from the passions with which others are tormented, is the only pleasing solitude. I can very justly say with the ancient sage, 'I am never less alone than when alone.'

As I am insignificant to the company in public places, and as it is visible I do not come thither, as most do, to show myself, I gratify the vanity of all who pretend to make an appearance, and have often as kind looks from well-dressed gentlemen and ladies, as a poet would bestow upon one of his audience. There are so many gratifications attend this public sort of obscurity, that some little distastes I daily receive have lost their anguish; and I did, the other day, without the least displeasure, overhear one say of me, 'that strange fellow'; and another answer, 'I have known the fellow's face these twelve years, and so must you; but I believe you are the first ever

asked who he was.' There are, I must confess, many to whom my person is as well known as that of their nearest relations, who give themselves no farther trouble about calling me by my name or quality, but speak of me very currently by 'Mr. What-d'ye-call-him.'

To make up for these trivial disadvantages, I have the high satisfaction of beholding all nature with an unprejudiced eye; and having nothing to do with men's passions or interests, I can, with the greater sagacity, consider their talents, manners, failings, and merits.

It is remarkable, that those who want any one sense, possess the others with greater force and vivacity. Thus my want of, or rather resignation of speech, gives me the advantages of a dumb man. I have, methinks, a more than ordinary penetration in seeing; and flatter myself that I have looked into the highest and lowest of mankind, and make shrewd guesses, without being admitted to their conversation, at the inmost thoughts and reflections of all whom I behold. It is from hence that good or ill fortune has no manner of force towards affecting my judgment. I see men flourishing in courts, and languishing in jails, without being prejudiced, from their circumstances, to their favour or disadvantage; but from their inward manner of bearing their condition, often pity the prosperous, and admire the unhappy.

Those who converse with the dumb, know from the turn of their eyes, and the changes of their countenance, their sentiments of the objects before them. I have indulged my silence to such an extravagance, that the few who are intimate with me answer my

smiles with concurrent sentences, and argue to the very point I shaked my head at, without my speaking. Will Honeycomb was very entertaining the other night at a play, to a gentleman who sat on his right hand, while I was at his left. The gentleman believed Will was talking to himself, when upon my looking with great approbation at a young thing in a box before us, he said, 'I am quite of another opinion. She has, I will allow, a very pleasing aspect, but, methinks, that simplicity in her countenance is rather childish than innocent.' When I observed her a second time, he said, 'I grant her dress is very becoming, but perhaps the merit of that choice is owing to her mother; for though,' continued he, 'I allow a beauty to be as much to be commended for the elegance of her dress, as a wit for that of his language, yet if she has stolen the colour of her ribands from another, or had advice about her trimmings, I shall not allow her the praise of dress, any more than I would call a plagiary an author.' When I threw my eye towards the next woman to her, Will spoke what I looked, according to his romantic imagination, in the following manner:

'Behold, you who dare, that charming virgin; behold the beauty of her person chastised by the innocence of her thoughts. Chastity, good-nature, and affability, are the graces that play in her countenance; she knows she is handsome, but she knows she is good. Conscious beauty adorned with conscious virtue! What a spirit is there in those eyes! What a bloom in that person! How is the whole woman expressed in her appearance! Her air has the beauty of motion, and her look the force of language.'

It was prudence to turn away my eyes from this object, and therefore I turned them to the thoughtless creatures who make up the lump of that sex, and move a knowing eye no more than the portraiture of insignificant people by ordinary painters, which are but pictures of pictures.

Thus the working of my own mind is the general entertainment of my life: I never enter into the commerce of discourse with any but my particular friends, and not in public even with them. Such a habit has perhaps raised in me uncommon reflections; but this effect I cannot communicate but by my writings. As my pleasures are almost wholly confined to those of the sight, I take it for a peculiar happiness that I have always had an easy and familiar admittance to the fair sex. If I never praised or flattered, I never belied or contradicted them. As these compose half the world, and are, by the just complaisance and gallantry of our nation, the more powerful part of our people, I shall dedicate a considerable share of these my speculations to their service, and shall lead the young through all the becoming duties of virginity, marriage, and widowhood. When it is a woman's day, in my works, I shall endeavour at a style and air suitable to their understanding. When I say this, I must be understood to mean, that I shall not lower but exalt the subjects I treat upon. Discourse for their entertainment is not to be debased, but refined. A man may appear learned without talking sentences, as in his ordinary gesture he discovers he can dance, though he does not cut capers. In a word, I shall take it for the greatest glory of my work, if among reasonable women this paper may furnish

tea-table talk. In order to it, I shall treat on matters which relate to females, as they are concerned to approach or fly from the other sex, or as they are tied to them by blood, interest, or affection. Upon this occasion I think it but reasonable to declare, that whatever skill I may have in speculation, I shall never betray what the eyes of lovers say to each other in my presence. At the same time I shall not think myself obliged by this promise to conceal any false protestations which I observe made by glances in public assemblies; but endeavour to make both sexes appear in their conduct what they are in their hearts. By this means, love, during the time of my speculations, shall be carried on with the same sincerity as any other affair of less consideration. As this is the greatest concern, men shall be from henceforth liable to the greatest reproach for misbehaviour in it. Falsehood in love shall hereafter bear a blacker aspect than infidelity in friendship, or villainy in business. For this great and good end, all breaches against that noble passion, the cement of society, shall be severely examined. But this, and all other matters loosely hinted at now, and in my former papers, shall have their proper place in my following discourses. The present writing is only to admonish the world, that they shall not find me an idle but a busy Spectator.

[*Spectator*, No. 4.

Sir Roger and his Servants

THE reception, manner of attendance, undisturbed freedom and quiet, which I meet with here in the country, has confirmed me in the opinion I always had, that the general corruption of manners in servants is owing to the conduct of masters. The aspect of every one in the family carries so much satisfaction, that it appears he knows the happy lot which has befallen him in being a member of it. There is one particular which I have seldom seen but at Sir Roger's; it is usual in all other places, that servants fly from the parts of the house through which their master is passing; on the contrary, here they industriously place themselves in his way; and it is on both sides, as it were, understood as a visit, when the servants appear without calling. This proceeds from the humane and equal temper of the man of the house, who also perfectly well knows how to enjoy a great estate with such economy as ever to be much beforehand. This makes his own mind untroubled, and consequently unapt to vent peevish expressions, or give passionate or inconsistent orders to those about him. Thus respect and love go together; and a certain cheerfulness in performance of their duty is the particular distinction of the lower part of this family. When a servant is called before his master, he does not come

with an expectation to hear himself rated for some trivial fault, threatened to be stripped, or used with any other unbecoming language, which mean masters often give to worthy servants; but it is often to know, what road he took that he came so readily back according to order: whether he passed by such a ground; if the old man who rents it is in good health; or whether he gave Sir Roger's love to him, or the like.

A man who preserves a respect founded on his benevolence to his dependants, lives rather like a prince than a master in his family: his orders are received as favours rather than duties; and the distinction of approaching him is part of the reward for executing what is commanded by him.

There is another circumstance in which my friend excels in his management, which is the manner of rewarding his servants. He has ever been of opinion that giving his cast clothes to be worn by valets has a very ill effect upon little minds, and creates a silly sense of equality between the parties, in persons affected only with outward things. I have heard him often pleasant on this occasion, and describe a young gentleman abusing his man in that coat, which a month or two before was the most pleasing distinction he was conscious of in himself. He would turn his discourse still more pleasantly upon the ladies' bounties of this kind; and I have heard him say he knew a fine woman, who distributed rewards and punishments in giving becoming or unbecoming dresses to her maids.

But my good friend is above these little instances of good-will, in bestowing only trifles on his servants: a good servant to him is sure of having it in his choice

very soon of being no servant at all. As I before observed, he is so good a husband, and knows so thoroughly that the skill of the purse is the cardinal virtue of this life; I say he knows so well that frugality is the support of generosity, that he can often spare a large fine when a tenement falls, and give that settlement to a good servant who has a mind to go into the world, or make a stranger pay the fine to that servant for his more comfortable maintenance, if he stays in his service.

A man of honour and generosity considers it would be miserable to himself to have no will but that of another, though it were of the best person breathing, and, for that reason, goes on as fast as he is able to put his servants into independent livelihoods. The greatest part of Sir Roger's estate is tenanted by persons who have served himself or his ancestors. It was to me extremely pleasant to observe the visitants from several parts to welcome his arrival into the country; and all the difference that I could take notice of between the late servants who came to see him, and those who stayed in the family, was, that these latter were looked upon as finer gentlemen and better courtiers.

This manumission and placing them in a way of livelihood, I look upon as only what is due to a good servant; which encouragement will make his successor be as diligent, as humble, and as ready as he was. There is something wonderful in the narrowness of those minds which can be pleased, and be barren of bounty to those who please them.

One might, on this occasion, recount the sense that great persons in all ages have had of the merit of their

dependants, and the heroic services which men have done their masters in the extremity of their fortunes, and shown to their undone patrons that fortune was all the difference between them; but as I design this my speculation only as a gentle admonition to thankless masters, I shall not go out of the occurrences of common life, but assert it as a general observation, that I never saw, but in Sir Roger's family and one or two more, good servants treated as they ought to be. Sir Roger's kindness extends to their children's children; and this very morning he sent his coachman's grandson to prentice. I shall conclude this paper with an account of a picture in his gallery, where there are many which will deserve my future observation.

At the very upper end of this handsome structure I saw the portraiture of two young men standing in a river, the one naked, the other in a livery. The person supported seemed half dead, but still so much alive as to show in his face exquisite joy and love towards the other. I thought the fainting figure resembled my friend Sir Roger; and looking at the butler who stood by me, for an account of it, he informed me that the person in the livery was a servant of Sir Roger's, who stood on the shore while his master was swimming, and observing him taken with some sudden illness and sink under water, jumped in and saved him. He told me Sir Roger took off the dress he was in as soon as he came home, and by a great bounty at that time, followed by his favour ever since, had made him master of that pretty seat which we saw at a distance as we came to this house. I remembered, indeed, Sir Roger said, there lived a very

worthy gentleman, to whom he was highly obliged, without mentioning anything farther. Upon my looking a little dissatisfied at some part of the picture, my attendant informed me that it was against Sir Roger's will, and at the earnest request of the gentleman himself, that he was drawn in the habit in which he had saved his master.

[*Spectator*, No. 107.

Family Portraits

I WAS this morning walking in the gallery, when Sir Roger entered at the end opposite to me, and advancing towards me, said he was glad to meet me among his relations the De Coverleys, and hoped I liked the conversation of so much good company, who were as silent as myself. I knew he alluded to the pictures, and as he is a gentleman who does not a little value himself upon his ancient descent, I expected he would give me some account of them. We were now arrived at the upper end of the gallery, when the knight faced towards one of the pictures, and, as we stood before it, he entered into the matter after his blunt way of saying things as they occur to his imagination, without regular introduction, or care to preserve the appearance of chain of thought.

'It is,' said he, 'worth while to consider the force of dress; and how the persons of one age differ from those of another, merely by that only. One may observe also, that the general fashion of one age has been followed by one particular set of people in another, and by them preserved from one generation to another. Thus the vast jetting coat and small bonnet, which was the habit in Henry the Seventh's time, is kept on in the yeomen of the guard; not without a good and politic view, because they look a foot

taller, and a foot and a half broader—besides that the cap leaves the face expanded, and consequently more terrible and fitter to stand at the entrance of palaces.

'This predecessor of ours, you see, is dressed after this manner, and his cheeks would be no larger than mine were he in a hat as I am. He was the last man that won a prize in the Tilt-yard (which is now a common street before Whitehall). You see the broken lance that lies there by his right foot. He shivered that lance of his adversary all to pieces; and bearing himself, look you, sir, in this manner, at the same time he came within the target of the gentleman who rode against him, and taking him with incredible force before him on the pummel of his saddle, he in that manner rid the tournament over, with an air that shewed he did it rather to perform the rules of the lists, than expose his enemy: however, it appeared he knew how to make use of a victory, and with a gentle trot he marched up to a gallery where their mistress sat (for they were rivals), and let him down with laudable courtesy and pardonable insolence. I do not know but it might be exactly where the coffee-house is now.

'You are to know this my ancestor was not only of a military genius, but fit also for the arts of peace, for he played on the bass-viol as well as any gentleman at court; you see where his viol hangs by his basket-hilt sword. The action at the Tilt-yard, you may be sure, won the fair lady, who was a maid-of-honour and the greatest beauty of her time; here she stands, the next picture. You see, sir, my great-great-great-grandmother has on the new-fashioned petticoat, except that the modern is gathered at the waist; my

grandmother appears as if she stood in a large drum, whereas the ladies now walk as if they were in a go-cart. For all this lady was bred at court, she became an excellent country-wife; she brought ten children, and when I show you the library, you shall see in her own hand (allowing for the difference of the language) the best receipt now in England both for a hasty-pudding and a white pot.

'If you please to fall back a little, because it is necessary to look at the three next pictures at one view; these are three sisters. She on the right hand who is so very beautiful, died a maid; the next to her, still handsomer, had the same fate, against her will; this homely thing in the middle had both their portions added to her own, and was stolen by a neighbouring gentleman, a man of stratagem and resolution; for he poisoned three mastiffs to come at her, and knocked down two deer-stealers in carrying her off. Misfortunes happen in all families. The theft of this romp, and so much money, was no great matter to our estate. But the next heir that possessed it was this soft gentleman whom you see there. Observe the small buttons, the little boots, the laces, the slashes about his clothes, and above all the posture he is drawn in (which to be sure was his own choosing): you see he sits with one hand on a desk, writing, and looking as it were another way, like an easy writer, or a sonneteer. He was one of those that had too much wit to know how to live in the world; he was a man of no justice, but great good manners; he ruined everybody that had anything to do with him, but never said a rude thing in his life; the most indolent person in the world, he would sign a deed that passed

away half his estate with his gloves on, but would not put on his hat before a lady if it were to save his country. He is said to be the first that made love by squeezing the hand. He left the estate with ten thousand pounds debt upon it; but, however, by all hands I have been informed, that he was every way the finest gentleman in the world. That debt lay heavy on our house for one generation, but it was retrieved by a gift from that honest man you see there, a citizen of our name, but nothing at all akin to us. I know Sir Andrew Freeport has said behind my back, that this man was descended from one of the ten children of the maid-of-honour I showed you above: but it was never made out. We winked at the thing indeed, because money was wanting at that time.'

Here I saw my friend a little embarrassed, and turned my face to the next portraiture.

Sir Roger went on with his account of the gallery in the following manner: 'This man (pointing to him I looked at) I take to be the honour of our house, Sir Humphry de Coverley; he was in his dealings as punctual as a tradesman, and as generous as a gentleman. He would have thought himself as much undone by breaking his word, as if it were to be followed by bankruptcy. He served his country as knight of this shire to his dying day. He found it no easy matter to maintain an integrity in his words and actions, even in things that regarded the offices which were incumbent upon him, in the care of his own affairs and relations of life, and therefore dreaded (though he had great talents) to go into employments of state, where he must be exposed to the snares of

ambition. Innocence of life, and great ability, were the distinguishing parts of his character; the latter, he had often observed, had led to the destruction of the former, and he used frequently to lament that great and good had not the same signification. He was an excellent husbandman, but had resolved not to exceed such a degree of wealth; all above it he bestowed in secret bounties many years after the sum he aimed at for his own use was attained. Yet he did not slacken his industry, but to a decent old age spent the life and fortune which were superfluous to himself, in the service of his friends and neighbours.'

Here we were called to dinner, and Sir Roger ended the discourse of this gentleman, by telling me, as we followed the servant, that this his ancestor was a brave man, and narrowly escaped being killed in the civil wars; 'for,' said he, 'he was sent out of the field upon a private message, the day before the battle of Worcester.' The whim of narrowly escaping by having been within a day of danger, with other matters above-mentioned, mixed with good sense, left me at a loss whether I was more delighted with my friend's wisdom or simplicity.

[*Spectator*, No. 109.

Sir Roger in Love

IN my first description of the company in which I pass most of my time, it may be remembered that I mentioned a great affliction which my friend Sir Roger had met with in his youth; which was no less than a disappointment in love. It happened this evening, that we fell into a very pleasing walk at a distance from his house. As soon as we came into it, 'It is,' quoth the good old man, looking round him with a smile, 'very hard, that any part of my land should be settled upon one who has used me so ill as the perverse widow did; and yet I am sure I could not see a sprig of any bough of this whole walk of trees, but I should reflect upon her and her severity. She has certainly the finest hand of any woman in the world. You are to know, this was the place wherein I used to muse upon her; and by that custom I can never come into it but the same tender sentiments revive in my mind, as if I had actually walked with that beautiful creature under these shades. I have been fool enough to carve her name on the bark of several of these trees; so unhappy is the condition of men in love, to attempt the removing of their passion by the methods which serve only to imprint it deeper. She has certainly the finest hand of any woman in the world.'

Here followed a profound silence; and I was not displeased to observe my friend falling so naturally into a discourse which I had ever before taken notice he industriously avoided. After a very long pause, he entered upon an account of this great circumstance in his life, with an air which I thought raised my idea of him above what I had ever had before; and gave me the picture of that cheerful mind of his, before it received that stroke which has ever since affected his words and actions. But he went on as follows :—

'I came to my estate in my twenty-second year, and resolved to follow the steps of the most worthy of my ancestors who have inhabited this spot of earth before me, in all the methods of hospitality and good neighbourhood, for the sake of my fame; and in country sports and recreations, for the sake of my health. In my twenty-third year I was obliged to serve as sheriff of the county; and in my servants, officers, and whole equipage, indulged the pleasure of a young man (who did not think ill of his own person) in taking that public occasion of showing my figure and behaviour to advantage. You may easily imagine to yourself what appearance I made, who am pretty tall, ride well, and was very well dressed, at the head of a whole county, with music before me, a feather in my hat, and my horse well bitted. I can assure you I was not a little pleased with the kind looks and glances I had from all the balconies and windows as I rode to the hall where the assizes were held. But, when I came there, a beautiful creature in a widow's habit sat in court to hear the event of a cause concerning her dower. This commanding creature (who was born for the destruction of all who behold her) put on

such a resignation in her countenance, and bore the whispers of all around the court with such a pretty uneasiness, I warrant you, and then recovered herself from one eye to another, until she was perfectly confused by meeting something so wistful in all she encountered, that at last, with a murrain to her, she cast her bewitching eye upon me. I no sooner met it but I bowed like a great surprised booby; and knowing her cause to be the first which came on, I cried, like a captivated calf as I was, "Make way for the defendant's witnesses." This sudden partiality made all the county immediately see the sheriff also was become a slave to the fine widow. During the time her cause was upon trial, she behaved herself, I warrant you, with such a deep attention to her business, took opportunities to have little billets handed to her counsel, then would be in such a pretty confusion, occasioned, you must know, by acting before so much company, that not only I but the whole court was prejudiced in her favour; and all that the next heir to her husband had to urge was thought so groundless and frivolous, that when it came to her counsel to reply, there was not half so much said as every one besides in the court thought he could have urged to her advantage. You must understand, sir, this perverse woman is one of those unaccountable creatures that secretly rejoice in the admiration of men, but indulge themselves in no farther consequences. Hence it is that she has ever had a train of admirers, and she removes from her slaves in town to those in the country, according to the seasons of the year. She is a reading lady, and far gone in the pleasures of friendship. She is always accompanied by a confidante, who is witness to her

daily protestations against our sex, and consequently a bar to her first steps towards love, upon the strength of her own maxims and declarations.

'However, I must needs say, this accomplished mistress of mine has distinguished me above the rest, and has been known to declare Sir Roger de Coverley was the tamest and most humane of all the brutes in the country. I was told she said so by one who thought he rallied me; but upon the strength of this slender encouragement of being thought least detestable, I made new liveries, new-paired my coach-horses, sent them all to town to be bitted, and taught to throw their legs well, and move all together, before I pretended to cross the country, and wait upon her. As soon as I thought my retinue suitable to the character of my fortune and youth, I set out from hence to make my addresses. The particular skill of this lady has ever been to inflame your wishes, and yet command respect. To make her mistress of this art, she has a greater share of knowledge, wit, and good sense than is usual even among men of merit. Then she is beautiful beyond the race of women. If you will not let her go on with a certain artifice with her eyes, and the skill of beauty, she will arm herself with her real charms, and strike you with admiration instead of desire. It is certain that if you were to behold the whole woman, there is that dignity in her aspect, that composure in her motion, that complacency in her manner, that if her form makes you hope, her merit makes you fear. But then again, she is such a desperate scholar, that no country gentleman can approach her without being a jest. As I was going to tell you, when I came to her house I was admitted

to her presence with great civility; at the same time she placed herself to be first seen by me in such an attitude, as I think you call the posture of a picture, that she discovered new charms, and I at last came towards her with such an awe as made me speechless. This she no sooner observed but she made her advantage of it, and began a discourse to me concerning love and honour, as they both are followed by pretenders, and the real votaries to them. When she discussed these points in a discourse which, I verily believe, was as learned as the best philosopher in Europe could possibly make, she asked me whether she was so happy as to fall in with my sentiments on these important particulars. Her confidante sat by her, and on my being in the last confusion and silence, this malicious aid of hers turning to her, says, 'I am very glad to observe Sir Roger pauses upon this subject, and seems resolved to deliver all his sentiments upon the matter when he pleases to speak.' They both kept their countenances, and after I had sat half an hour meditating how to behave before such profound casuists, I rose up and took my leave. Chance has since that time thrown me very often in her way, and she as often has directed a discourse to me which I do not understand. This barbarity has kept me ever at a distance from the most beautiful object my eyes ever beheld. It is thus also she deals with all mankind, and you must make love to her as you would conquer the sphinx, by posing her. But were she like other women, and that there were any talking to her, how constant must the pleasure of that man be, who could converse with a creature——but, after all, you may be sure her heart is fixed on some

one or other: and yet I have been credibly informed —but who can believe half that is said!—After she had done speaking to me, she put her hand to her bosom, and adjusted her tucker; then she cast her eyes a little down, upon my beholding her too earnestly. They say she sings excellently: her voice in her ordinary speech has something in it inexpressibly sweet. You must know I dined with her at a public table the day after I first saw her, and she helped me to some tansy in the eye of all the gentlemen in the country. She has certainly the finest hand of any woman in the world. I can assure you, sir, were you to behold her, you would be in the same condition; for as her speech is music, her form is angelic. But I find I grow irregular while I am talking of her; but indeed it would be stupidity to be unconcerned at such perfection. Oh, the excellent creature! she is as inimitable to all women, as she is inaccessible to all men!'

I found my friend begin to rave, and insensibly led him towards the house, that we might be joined by some other company; and am convinced that the widow is the secret cause of all that inconsistency which appears in some part of my friend's discourse; though he has so much command of himself as not directly to mention her, yet according to that of Martial which one knows not how to render into English, *dum tacet hanc loquitur*. I shall end this paper with that whole epigram, which represents with much humour my honest friend's condition:—

Quicquid agit Rufus, nihil est, nisi Nævia Rufo,
Si gaudet, si flet, si tacet, hanc loquitur:

Cœnat, propinat, poscit, negat, annuit, una est
  Nævia: si non sit Nævia, mutus erit.
Scriberet hesterna patri cum luce salutem,
  Nævia lux, inquit, Nævia numen, ave.

Let Rufus weep, rejoice, stand, sit, or walk,
Still he can nothing but of Nævia talk;
Let him eat, drink, ask questions, or dispute,
Still he must speak of Nævia, or be mute.
He writ to his father, ending with this line—
I am, my lovely Nævia, ever thine.

[*Spectator*, No. 113.

The Huntsman in Love

THIS agreeable seat is surrounded with so many pleasing walks, which are struck out of a wood, in the midst of which the house stands, that one can hardly ever be weary of rambling from one labyrinth of delight to another. To one used to live in a city; the charms of the country are so exquisite that the mind is lost in a certain transport which raises us above ordinary life, and is yet not strong enough to be inconsistent with tranquillity. This state of mind was I in, ravished with the murmur of waters, the whisper of breezes, the singing of birds; and whether I looked up to the heavens, down on the earth, or turned to the prospects around me, still struck with new sense of pleasure; when I found by the voice of my friend, who walked by me, that we had insensibly strolled into the grove sacred to the widow. 'This woman,' says he, 'is of all others the most unintelligible: she either designs to marry, or she does not. What is the most perplexing of all is, that she doth not either say to her lovers she has any resolution against that condition of life in general, or that she banishes them; but, conscious of her own merit, she permits their addresses, without fear of any ill consequence, or want of respect, from their rage or despair.' She has that

in her aspect against which it is impossible to offend. A man whose thoughts are constantly bent upon so agreeable an object, must be excused if the ordinary occurrences in conversation are below his attention. I call her indeed perverse; but, alas! why do I call her so? because her superior merit is such, that I cannot approach her without awe; that my heart is checked by too much esteem: I am angry that her charms are not more accessible; that I am more inclined to worship than salute her. How often have I wished her unhappy, that I might have an opportunity of serving her! and how often troubled in that very imagination at giving her the pain of being obliged! Well, I have led a miserable life in secret upon her account; but fancy she would have condescended to have some regard for me, if it had not been for that watchful animal her confidante.

'Of all persons under the sun,' continued he, calling me by my name, 'be sure to set a mark upon confidantes: they are of all people the most impertinent. What is most pleasant to observe in them is, that they assume to themselves the merit of persons whom they have in their custody. Orestilla is a great fortune, and in wonderful danger of surprises, therefore full of suspicions of the least indifferent thing, particularly careful of new acquaintance, and of growing too familiar with the old. Themista, her favourite woman, is every whit as careful of whom she speaks to, and what she says. Let the ward be a beauty, her confidante shall treat you with an air of distance; let her be a fortune, and she assumes the suspicious behaviour of her friend and patroness. Thus it is that very many of our unmarried women of distinction are to all

intents and purposes married, except the consideration of different sexes. They are directly under the conduct of their whisperer; and think they are in a state of freedom, while they can prate with one of these attendants of all men in general, and still avoid the man they most like. You do not see one heiress in a hundred whose fate does not turn upon this circumstance of choosing a confidante. Thus it is that the lady is addressed to, presented, and flattered, only by proxy, in her woman. In my case, how is it possible that——' Sir Roger was proceeding in his harangue, when we heard the voice of one speaking very importunately, and repeating these words, 'What, not one smile?' We followed the sound till we came to a close thicket, on the other side of which we saw a young woman sitting as it were in a personated sullenness just over a transparent fountain. Opposite to her stood Mr. William, Sir Roger's master of the game. The knight whispered me, 'Hist, these are lovers.' The huntsman looking earnestly at the shadow of the young maiden in the stream—'O thou dear picture, if thou couldest remain there in the absence of that fair creature whom you represent in the water, how willingly could I stand here satisfied for ever, without troubling my dear Betty herself with any mention of her unfortunate William, whom she is angry with! But alas! when she pleases to be gone, thou wilt also vanish—Yet let me talk to thee while thou dost stay. Tell my dearest Betty, thou dost not more depend upon her than does her William; her absence will make away with me as well as thee. If she offers to remove thee, I will jump into these waves to lay hold on thee —herself, her own dear person, I must never embrace

again—still do you hear me without one smile—it is too much to bear.' He had no sooner spoken these words, but he made an offer of throwing himself into the water: at which his mistress started up, and at the next instant he jumped across the fountain, and met her in an embrace. She, half recovering from her fright, said in the most charming voice imaginable, and with a tone of complaint, 'I thought how well you would drown yourself. No, no, you will not drown yourself till you have taken your leave of Susan Holiday.' The huntsman, with a tenderness that spoke the most passionate love, and with his cheek close to hers, whispered the softest vows of fidelity in her ear, and cried, 'Do not, my dear, believe a word Kate Willow says; she is spiteful, and makes stories, because she loves to hear me talk to herself for your sake.' 'Look you there,' quoth Sir Roger, 'do you see there, all mischief comes from confidantes! But let us not interrupt them; the maid is honest, and the man dares not be otherwise, for he knows I loved her father: I will interpose in this matter, and hasten the wedding. Kate Willow is a witty mischievous wench in the neighbourhood, who was a beauty; and makes me hope I shall see the perverse widow in her condition. She was so flippant in her answers to all the honest fellows that came near her, and so very vain of her beauty, that she has valued herself upon her charms till they have ceased. She therefore now makes it her business to prevent other young women from being more discreet than she was herself: however, the saucy thing said the other day well enough, "Sir Roger and I must make a match, for we are both despised by those we loved." The hussy has a great

deal of power wherever she comes, and has her share of cunning.

'However, when I reflect upon this woman, I do not know whether in the main I am the worse for having loved her: whenever she is recalled to my imagination, my youth returns, and I feel a forgotten warmth in my veins. This affliction in my life has streaked all my conduct with a softness, of which I should otherwise have been incapable. It is owing, perhaps, to this dear image in my heart that I am apt to relent, that I easily forgive, and that many desirable things are grown into my temper, which I should not have arrived at by better motives than the thought of being one day hers. I am pretty well satisfied such a passion as I have had is never well cured; and between you and me, I am often apt to imagine it has had some whimsical effect upon my brain: for I frequently find, that in my most serious discourse I let fall some comical familiarity of speech or odd phrase that makes the company laugh. However, I cannot but allow she is a most excellent woman. When she is in the country, I warrant she does not run into dairies, but reads upon the nature of plants; but has a glass hive, and comes into the garden out of books to see them work, and observe the policies of their commonwealth. She understands everything. I would give ten pounds to hear her argue with my friend Sir Andrew Freeport about trade. No, no, for all she looks so innocent as it were, take my word for it she is no fool.'

[*Spectator*, No. 118.

Captain Sentry on the Soldier's Life

THERE is no sort of people whose conversation is so pleasant as that of military men, who derive their courage and magnanimity from thought and reflection. The many adventures which attend their way of life makes their conversation so full of incidents, and gives them so frank an air in speaking of what they have been witnesses of, that no company can be more amiable than that of men of sense who are soldiers. There is a certain irregular way in their narrations or discourse, which has something more warm and pleasing than we meet with among men who are used to adjust and methodise their thoughts.

I was this evening walking in the fields with my friend Captain Sentry, and I could not, from the many relations which I drew him into of what passed when he was in the service, forbear expressing my wonder, that the fear of death, which we, the rest of mankind, arm ourselves against with so much contemplation, reason, and philosophy, should appear so little in camps, that common men march into open breaches, meet opposite battalions, not only without reluctance but with alacrity. My friend answered what I said in the following manner: 'What you wonder at may very naturally be the subject of admiration to all who are not conversant in camps; but when a man has

spent some time in that way of life, he observes a certain mechanic courage which the ordinary race of men become masters of from acting always in a crowd: they see indeed many drop, but then they see many more alive; they observe themselves escape very narrowly, and they do not know why they should not again. Besides which general way of loose thinking, they usually spend the other part of their time in pleasures upon which their minds are so entirely bent, that short labours or dangers are but a cheap purchase of jollity, triumph, victory, fresh quarters, new scenes, and uncommon adventures. Such are the thoughts of the executive part of an army, and indeed of the gross of mankind in general; but none of these men of mechanical courage have ever made any great figure in the profession of arms. Those who are formed for command, are such as have reasoned themselves, out of a consideration of greater good than length of days, into such a negligence of their being, as to make it their first position, that it is one day to be resigned; and since it is, in the prosecution of worthy actions and service of mankind they can put it to habitual hazard. "The event of our designs," say they, "as it relates to others, is uncertain; but as it relates to ourselves it must be prosperous, while we are in the pursuit of our duty, and within the terms upon which providence has ensured our happiness, whether we die or lie. All that nature has prescribed must be good; and as death is natural to us, it is absurdity to fear it." Fear loses its purpose when we are sure it cannot preserve us, and we should draw resolution to meet it from the impossibility to escape it. Without a resignation to the necessity of dying, there can be no

capacity in man to attempt anything that is glorious: but when they have once attained to that perfection, the pleasures of a life spent in martial adventures, are as great as any of which the human mind is capable. The force of reason gives a certain beauty, mixed with the conscience of well-doing and thirst of glory, to all which before was terrible and ghastly to the imagination. Add to this, that the fellowship of danger, the common good of mankind, the general cause, and the manifest virtue you may observe in so many men, who made no figure till that day, are so many incentives to destroy the little consideration of their own persons. Such are the heroic part of soldiers who are qualified for leaders: as to the rest whom I before spoke of, I know not how it is, but they arrive at a certain habit of being void of thought, insomuch that on occasion of the most imminent danger they are still in the same indifference. Nay, I remember an instance of a gay Frenchman, who was led on in battle by a superior officer (whose conduct it was his custom to speak of always with contempt and raillery), and in the beginning of the action received a wound he was sensible was mortal; his reflection on this occasion was, "I wish I could live another hour, to see how this blundering coxcomb will get clear of this business."

'I remember two young fellows who rid in the same squadron of a troop of horse, who were ever together; they ate, they drank, they intrigued; in a word, all their passions and affections seemed to tend the same way, and they appeared serviceable to each other in them. We were in the dusk of the evening to march over a river, and the troop these gentlemen belonged to were to be transported in a ferry-boat, as fast as

they could. One of the friends was now in the boat, while the other was drawn up with others by the water-side waiting the return of the boat. A disorder happened in the passage by an unruly horse; and a gentleman who had the rein of his horse negligently under his arm, was forced into the water by his horse's jumping over. The friend on the shore cried out, "Who's that is drowned trow?" He was immediately answered, "Your friend, Harry Thompson." He very gravely replied, "Ay, he had a mad horse." This short epitaph from such a familiar, without more words, gave me, at that time under twenty, a very moderate opinion of the friendship of companions. Thus is affection and every other motive of life in the generality rooted out by the present busy scene about them: they lament no man whose capacity can be supplied by another; and where men converse without delicacy, the next man you meet will serve as well as he whom you have lived with half your life. To such the devastation of countries, the misery of inhabitants, the cries of the pillaged, and the silent sorrow of the great unfortunate, are ordinary objects; their minds are bent upon the little gratifications of their own senses and appetites, forgetful of compassion, insensible of glory, avoiding only shame; their whole hearts taken up with the trivial hope of meeting and being merry. These are the people who make up the gross of the soldiery: but the fine gentleman in that band of men is such a one as I have now in my eye, who is foremost in all danger to which he is ordered. His officers are his friends and companions, as they are men of honour and gentlemen; the private men his brethren, as they are of his species. He is beloved of

all that behold him: they wish him in danger as he views their ranks, that they may have occasions to save him at their own hazard. Mutual love is the order of the files where he commands; every man afraid for himself and his neighbour, not lest their commander should punish them, but lest he should be offended. Such is his regiment who knows mankind, and feels their distresses so far as to prevent them. Just in distributing what is their due, he would think himself below their tailor to wear a snip of their clothes in lace upon his own; and below the most rapacious agent, should he enjoy a farthing above his own pay. Go on, brave man, immortal glory is thy fortune, and immortal happiness thy reward.'

[*Spectator*, No. 152.

PERSONAL AND DOMESTIC

Mr. Bickerstaff on Himself

I HAVE received this short epistle from an unknown hand.

'SIR,

'I have no more to trouble you with than to desire you would in your next help me to some answer to the enclosed concerning yourself. In the meantime I congratulate you upon the increase of your fame, which you see has extended itself beyond the bills of mortality.'

'SIR,

'That the country is barren of news has been the excuse, time out of mind, for dropping a correspondence with our friends in London; as if it were impossible out of a coffee-house to write an agreeable letter. I am too ingenuous to endeavour at the covering of my negligence with so common an excuse. Doubtless, amongst friends, bred, as we have been, to the better knowledge of books as well as men, a letter dated from a garden, a grotto, a fountain, a wood, a meadow, or the banks of a river, may be more entertaining than one from Tom's, Will's, White's, or St. James's. I promise, therefore, to be frequent for the future in my rural dates to you. But from fear you should, from what I have said, be induced to believe I

shun the commerce of men, I must inform you, that there is a fresh topic of discourse lately arisen amongst the ingenious in our part of the world, and is become the more fashionable for the ladies giving in to it. This we owe to Isaac Bickerstaff, who is very much censured by some, and as much justified by others. Some criticise his style, his humour, and his matter; others admire the whole man. Some pretend, from the informations of their friends in town, to decipher the author; and others confess they are lost in their guesses. For my part, I must own myself a professed admirer of the paper, and desire you to send me a complete set, together with your thoughts of the squire and his lucubrations.'

There is no pleasure like that of receiving praise from the praiseworthy; and I own it a very solid happiness, that these my lucubrations are approved by a person of so fine a taste as the author of this letter, who is capable of enjoying the world in the simplicity of its natural beauties. This pastoral letter, if I may so call it, must be written by a man who carries his entertainment wherever he goes, and is undoubtedly one of those happy men who appear far otherwise to the vulgar. I dare say, he is not envied by the vicious, the vain, the frolic, and the loud; but is continually blessed with that strong and serious delight, which flows from a well-taught and liberal mind. With great respect to country sports, I may say, this gentleman could pass his time agreeably, if there were not a hare or a fox in his county. That calm and elegant satisfaction which the vulgar call melancholy is the true and proper delight of men of knowledge and virtue.

What we take for diversion, which is a kind of forgetting ourselves, is but a mean way of entertainment, in comparison of that which is considering, knowing, and enjoying ourselves. The pleasures of ordinary people are in their passions; but the seat of this delight is in the reason and understanding. Such a frame of mind raises that sweet enthusiasm, which warms the imagination at the sight of every work of nature, and turns all round you into a picture and landscape. I shall be ever proud of advices from this gentleman; for I profess writing news from the learned, as well as the busy world.

As for my labours, which he is pleased to inquire after, if they can but wear one impertinence out of human life, destroy a single vice, or give a morning's cheerfulness to an honest mind—in short, if the world can be but one virtue the better, or in any degree less vicious, or receive from them the smallest addition to their innocent diversions—I shall not think my pains, or indeed my life, to have been spent in vain.

Thus far as to my studies. It will be expected I should in the next place give some account of my life. I shall therefore, for the satisfaction of the present age, and the benefit of posterity, present the world with the following abridgment of it.

It is remarkable, that I was bred by hand, and ate nothing but milk until I was a twelvemonth old; from which time, to the eighth year of my age, I was observed to delight in pudding and potatoes; and indeed I retain a benevolence for that sort of food to this day. I do not remember that I distinguished myself in anything at those years, but by my great skill at taw, for which I was so barbarously used, that

it has ever since given me an aversion to gaming. In my twelfth year, I suffered very much for two or three false concords. At fifteen I was sent to the University, and stayed there for some time; but a drum passing by, being a lover of music, I enlisted myself for a soldier. As years came on, I began to examine things, and grew discontented at the times. This made me quit the sword, and take to the study of the occult sciences, in which I was so wrapped up, that Oliver Cromwell had been buried, and taken up again, five years before I heard he was dead. This gave me first the reputation of a conjurer, which has been of great disadvantage to me ever since, and kept me out of all public employments. The greater part of my later years has been divided between Dick's coffee-house, the Trumpet in Sheer Lane, and my own lodgings.

[*Tatler*, No. 89.

Memories of his Childhood

THERE are those among mankind who can enjoy no relish of their being, except the world is made acquainted with all that relates to them, and think everything lost that passes unobserved; but others find a solid delight in stealing by the crowd, and modelling their life after such a manner, as is as much above the approbation as the practice of the vulgar. Life being too short to give instances great enough of true friendship or goodwill, some sages have thought it pious to preserve a certain reverence for the names of their deceased friends; and have withdrawn themselves from the rest of the world at certain seasons, to commemorate in their own thoughts such of their acquaintance who have gone before them out of this life. And indeed, when we are advanced in years, there is not a more pleasing entertainment, than to recollect in a gloomy moment the many we have parted with, that have been dear and agreeable to us, and to cast a melancholy thought or two after those, with whom, perhaps, we have indulged ourselves in whole nights of mirth and jollity. With such inclinations in my heart I went to my closet yesterday in the evening, and resolved to be sorrowful; upon which occasion I could not but look with disdain upon myself, that though all the reasons which I had to lament

the loss of many of my friends are now as forcible as at the moment of their departure, yet did not my heart swell with the same sorrow which I felt at the time; but I could, without tears, reflect upon many pleasing adventures I have had with some, who have long been blended with common earth. Though it is by the benefit of nature, that length of time thus blots out the violence of afflictions; yet, with tempers too much given to pleasure, it is almost necessary to revive the old places of grief in our memory; and ponder step by step on past life, to lead the mind into that sobriety of thought which poises the heart, and makes it beat with due time, without being quickened with desire, or retarded with despair, from its proper and equal motion. When we wind up a clock that is out of order, to make it go well for the future, we do not immediately set the hand to the present instant, but we make it strike the round of all its hours, before it can recover the regularity of its time. Such, thought I, shall be my method this evening; and since it is that day of the year which I dedicate to the memory of such in another life as I much delighted in when living, an hour or two shall be sacred to sorrow and their memory, while I run over all the melancholy circumstances of this kind which have occurred to me in my whole life.

The first sense of sorrow I ever knew was upon the death of my father, at which time I was not quite five years of age; but was rather amazed at what all the house meant, than possessed with a real understanding why nobody was willing to play with me. I remember I went into the room where his body lay, and my mother sat weeping alone by it. I had my battledore

in my hand, and fell a-beating the coffin, and calling Papa; for, I know not how, I had some slight idea that he was locked up there. My mother caught me in her arms, and, transported beyond all patience of the silent grief she was before in, she almost smothered me in her embraces; and told me in a flood of tears, 'Papa could not hear me, and would play with me no more, for they were going to put him under ground, whence he could never come to us again.' She was a very beautiful woman, of a noble spirit, and there was a dignity in her grief amidst all the wildness of her transport; which, methought, struck me with an instinct of sorrow, that, before I was sensible of what it was to grieve, seized my very soul, and has made pity the weakness of my heart ever since. The mind in infancy is, methinks, like the body in embryo; and receives impressions so forcible, that they are as hard to be removed by reason, as any mark with which a child is born is to be taken away by any future application. Hence it is that good-nature in me is no merit; but having been so frequently overwhelmed with her tears before I knew the cause of any affliction, or could draw defences from my own judgment, I imbibed commiseration, remorse, and an unmanly gentleness of mind, which has since ensnared me into ten thousand calamities; and from whence I can reap no advantage, except it be, that, in such a humour as I am now in, I can the better indulge myself in the softness of humanity, and enjoy that sweet anxiety which arises from the memory of past afflictions.

We, that are very old, are better able to remember things which befell us in our distant youth, than the passages of later days. For this reason it is, that the

companions of my strong and vigorous years present themselves more immediately to me in this office of sorrow. Untimely and unhappy deaths are what we are most apt to lament; so little are we able to make it indifferent when a thing happens, though we know it must happen. Thus we groan under life, and bewail those who are relieved from it. Every object that returns to our imagination raises different passions, according to the circumstance of their departure. Who can have lived in an army, and in a serious hour reflect upon the many gay and agreeable men that might long have flourished in the arts of peace, and not join with the imprecations of the fatherless and widow on the tyrant to whose ambition they fell sacrifices? But gallant men, who are cut off by the sword, move rather our veneration than our pity; and we gather relief enough from their own contempt of death, to make that no evil, which was approached with so much cheerfulness, and attended with so much honour. But when we turn our thoughts from the great parts of life on such occasions, and instead of lamenting those who stood ready to give death to those from whom they had the fortune to receive it; I say, when we let our thoughts wander from such noble objects, and consider the havoc which is made among the tender and the innocent, pity enters with an unmixed softness, and possesses all our souls at once.

Here (were there words to express such sentiments with proper tenderness) I should record the beauty, innocence, and untimely death of the first object my eyes ever beheld with love. The beauteous virgin! how ignorantly did she charm, how carelessly excel! O death! thou hast right to the bold, to the ambitious,

to the high, and to the haughty; but why this cruelty to the humble, to the meek, to the undiscerning, to the thoughtless? Nor age, nor business, nor distress, can erase the dear image from my imagination. In the same week I saw her dressed for a ball, and in a shroud. How ill did the habit of death become the pretty trifler! I still behold the smiling earth——A large train of disasters were coming on to my memory, when my servant knocked at my closet-door, and interrupted me with a letter, attended with a hamper of wine, of the same sort with that which is to be put to sale on Thursday next, at Garraway's coffee-house. Upon the receipt of it, I sent for three of my friends. We are so intimate, that we can be company in whatever state of mind we meet, and can entertain each other without expecting always to rejoice. The wine we found to be generous and warming, but with such a heat as moved us rather to be cheerful than frolicsome. It revived the spirits without firing the blood. We commended it until two of the clock this morning; and having to-day met a little before dinner, we found, that though we drank two bottles a man, we had much more reason to recollect than forget what had passed the night before.

[*Tatler*, No. 181.

A Visit to a Friend

THERE are several persons who have many pleasures and entertainments in their possession, which they do not enjoy. It is, therefore, a kind and good office to acquaint them with their own happiness, and turn their attention to such instances of their good fortune as they are apt to overlook. Persons in the married state often want such a monitor; and pine away their days, by looking upon the same condition in anguish and murmur, which carries with it in the opinion of others a complication of all the pleasures of life, and a retreat from its inquietudes.

I am led into this thought by a visit I made an old friend, who was formerly my school-fellow. He came to town last week with his family for the winter, and yesterday morning sent me word his wife expected me to dinner. I am, as it were, at home at that house, and every member of it knows me for their well-wisher. I cannot indeed express the pleasure it is, to be met by the children with so much joy as I am when I go thither. The boys and girls strive who shall come first, when they think it is I that am knocking at the door; and that child which loses the race to me runs back again to tell the father it is Mr. Bickerstaff. This day I was led in by a pretty girl, that we all thought must have forgot me; for the

family has been out of town these two years. Her knowing me again was a mighty subject with us, and took up our discourse at the first entrance. After which, they began to rally me upon a thousand little stories they heard in the country, about my marriage to one of my neighbour's daughters. Upon which the gentleman, my friend, said, 'Nay, if Mr. Bickerstaff marries a child of any of his old companions, I hope mine shall have the preference; there is Mrs. Mary is now sixteen and would make him as fine a widow as the best of them. But I know him too well; he is so enamoured with the very memory of those who flourished in our youth, that he will not so much as look upon the modern beauties. I remember, old gentleman, how often you went home in a day to refresh your countenance and dress when Teraminta reigned in your heart. As we came up in the coach, I repeated to my wife some of your verses on her.' With such reflections on little passages which happened long ago, we passed our time, during a cheerful and elegant meal. After dinner his lady left the room, as did also the children. As soon as we were alone, he took me by the hand; 'Well, my good friend,' says he, 'I am heartily glad to see thee; I was afraid you would never have seen all the company that dined with you to-day again. Do not you think the good woman of the house a little altered since you followed her from the play-house, to find out who she was, for me?' I perceived a tear fall down his cheek as he spoke, which moved me not a little. But, to turn the discourse, I said, 'She is not indeed quite that creature she was, when she returned me the letter I carried from you; and told me, "she hoped, as I was a gentle-

man, I would be employed no more to trouble her, who had never offended me; but would be so much the gentleman's friend, as to dissuade him from a pursuit, which he could never succeed in." You may remember, I thought her in earnest; and you were forced to employ your cousin Will, who made his sister get acquainted with her, for you? You cannot expect her to be for ever fifteen.' 'Fifteen!' replied my good friend: 'Ah! you little understand, you that have lived a bachelor, how great, how exquisite a pleasure there is, in being really beloved! It is impossible that the most beauteous face in nature should raise in me such pleasing ideas, as when I look upon that excellent woman. That fading in her countenance is chiefly caused by her watching with me, in my fever. This was followed by a fit of sickness, which had like to have carried her off last winter. I tell you sincerely, I have so many obligations to her, that I cannot, with any sort of moderation, think of her present state of health. But as to what you say of fifteen, she gives me every day pleasures beyond what I ever knew in the possession of her beauty, when I was in the vigour of youth. Every moment of her life brings me fresh instances of her complacency to my inclinations, and her prudence in regard to my fortune. Her face is to me much more beautiful than when I first saw it; there is no decay in any feature which I cannot trace from the very instant it was occasioned by some anxious concern for my welfare and interests. Thus, at the same time, methinks, the love I conceived towards her for what she was, is heightened by my gratitude for what she is. The love of a wife is as much above the idle passion commonly

called by that name, as the loud laughter of buffoons is inferior to the elegant mirth of gentlemen. Oh! she is an inestimable jewel. In her examination of her household affairs she shows a certain fearfulness to find a fault, which makes her servants obey her like children; and the meanest we have has an ingenuous shame for an offence, not always to be seen in children in other families. I speak freely to you, my old friend; ever since her sickness, things that gave me the quickest joy before, turn now to a certain anxiety. As the children play in the next room, I know the poor things by their steps, and am considering what they must do, should they lose their mother in their tender years. The pleasure I used to take in telling my boy stories of battles, and asking my girl questions about the disposal of her baby, and the gossiping of it, is turned into inward reflection and melancholy.'

He would have gone on in this tender way, when the good lady entered, and, with an inexpressible sweetness in her countenance, told us, 'she had been searching her closet for something very good, to treat such an old friend as I was.' Her husband's eyes sparkled with pleasure at the cheerfulness of her countenance; and I saw all his fears vanish in an instant. The lady observing something in our looks which showed we had been more serious than ordinary, and seeing her husband receive her with great concern under a forced cheerfulness, immediately guessed at what we had been talking of; and applying herself to me, said, with a smile, 'Mr. Bickerstaff, do not believe a word of what he tells you, I shall still live to have you for my second, as I have often promised you, unless he takes more care of himself than he has done

since his coming to town. You must know, he tells me that he finds London is a much more healthy place than the country; for he sees several of his old acquaintance and school-fellows are here young fellows with fair full-bottomed periwigs. I could scarce keep him in this morning from going out open-breasted.' My friend, who is always extremely delighted with her agreeable humour, made her sit down with us. She did it with that easiness which is peculiar to women of sense; and to keep up the good-humour she had brought in with her, turned her raillery upon me. 'Mr. Bickerstaff, you remember you followed me one night from the play-house; suppose you should carry me thither to-morrow night, and lead me into the front box.' This put us into a long field of discourse about the beauties, who were mothers to the present, and shined in the boxes twenty years ago. I told her, 'I was glad she had transferred so many of her charms, and I did not question but her eldest daughter was within half a year of being a toast.'

We were pleasing ourselves with this fantastical preferment of the young lady, when on a sudden we were alarmed with the noise of a drum, and immediately entered my little godson to give me a point of war. His mother, between laughing and chiding, would have put him out of the room; but I would not part with him so. I found, upon conversation with him, though he was a little noisy in his mirth, that the child had excellent parts, and was a great master of all the learning on the other side eight years old. I perceived him a very great historian in *Æsop's Fables*: but he frankly declared to me his mind, 'that he did not delight in that learning, because he did not believe

they were true'; for which reason I found he had very much turned his studies, for about a twelvemonth past, into the lives and adventures of Don Belianis of Greece, Guy of Warwick, the Seven Champions, and other historians of that age. I could not but observe the satisfaction the father took in the forwardness of his son; and that these diversions might turn to some profit, I found the boy had made remarks, which might be of service to him during the course of his whole life. He would tell you the mismanagements of John Hickerthrift, find fault with the passionate temper in Bevis of Southampton, and loved Saint George for being the champion of England; and by this means had his thoughts insensibly moulded into the notions of discretion, virtue, and honour. I was extolling his accomplishments, when the mother told me, 'that the little girl who led me in this morning was in her way a better scholar than he. Betty,' said she, 'deals chiefly in fairies and sprites; and sometimes in a winter night will terrify the maids with her accounts, until they are afraid to go up to bed.'

I sat with them until it was very late, sometimes in merry, sometimes in serious discourse, with this particular pleasure, which gives the only true relish to all conversation, a sense that every one of us liked each other. I went home, considering the different conditions of a married life and that of a bachelor; and I must confess it struck me with a secret concern, to reflect, that whenever I go off I shall leave no traces behind me. In this pensive mood I returned to my family; that is to say, to my maid, my dog, and my cat, who only can be the better or worse for what happens to me. [*Tatler*, No. 95.

A Visit to a Friend — *continued*

I WAS walking about my chamber this morning in a very gay humour, when I saw a coach stop at my door, and a youth about fifteen alighting out of it, whom I perceived to be the eldest son of my bosom friend that I gave some account of in my paper of the seventeenth of the last month. I felt a sensible pleasure rising in me at the sight of him, my acquaintance having begun with his father when he was just such a stripling, and about that very age. When he came up to me, he took me by the hand, and burst out in tears. I was extremely moved, and immediately said, 'Child, how does your father do?' He began to reply, 'My mother——' But could not go on for weeping. I went down with him into the coach, and gathered out of him, 'that his mother was then dying, and that, while the holy man was doing the last offices to her, he had taken that time to come and call me to his father, who, he said, would certainly break his heart, if I did not go and comfort him.' The child's discretion in coming to me of his own head, and the tenderness he showed for his parents, would have quite overpowered me, had I not resolved to fortify myself for the seasonable performances of those duties which I owed to my friend. As we were going, I could not but reflect upon the character of that excel-

lent woman, and the greatness of his grief for the loss of one who has ever been the support to him under all other afflictions. How, thought I, will he be able to bear the hour of her death, that could not, when I was lately with him, speak of a sickness, which was then past, without sorrow! We were now got pretty far into Westminster, and arrived at my friend's house. At the door of it I met Favonius, not without a secret satisfaction to find he had been there. I had formerly conversed with him at this house; and as he abounds with that sort of virtue and knowledge which makes religion beautiful, and never leads the conversation into the violence and rage of party-disputes, I listened to him with great pleasure. Our discourse chanced to be upon the subject of death, which he treated with such a strength of reason, and greatness of soul, that, instead of being terrible, it appeared to a mind rightly cultivated, altogether to be contemned, or rather to be desired. As I met him at the door, I saw in his face a certain glowing of grief and humanity, heightened with an air of fortitude and resolution, which, as I afterwards found, had such an irresistible force, as to suspend the pains of the dying, and the lamentation of the nearest friends who attended her. I went up directly to the room where she lay, and was met at the entrance by my friend, who, notwithstanding his thoughts had been composed a little before, at the sight of me turned away his face and wept. The little family of children renewed the expressions of their sorrow according to their several ages and degrees of understanding. The eldest daughter was in tears, busied in attendance upon her mother; others were kneeling about the bedside; and what

troubled me most was, to see a little boy, who was too young to know the reason, weeping only because his sisters did. The only one in the room who seemed resigned and comforted was the dying person. At my approach to the bedside, she told me, with a low, broken voice, 'This is kindly done—take care of your friend—do not go from him!' She had before taken leave of her husband and children, in a manner proper for so solemn a parting, and with a gracefulness peculiar to a woman of her character. My heart was torn in pieces, to see the husband on one side suppressing and keeping down the swellings of his grief, for fear of disturbing her in her last moments; and the wife, even at that time, concealing the pains she endured, for fear of increasing his affliction. She kept her eyes upon him for some moments after she grew speechless, and soon after closed them for ever. In the moment of her departure, my friend, who had thus far commanded himself, gave a deep groan, and fell into a swoon by her bedside. The distraction of the children, who thought they saw both their parents expiring together, and now lying dead before them, would have melted the hardest heart; but they soon perceived their father recover; whom I helped to remove into another room, with a resolution to accompany him until the first pangs of his affliction were abated. I knew consolation would now be impertinent; and therefore contented myself to sit by him, and condole with him in silence. For I shall here use the method of an ancient author, who, in one of his epistles, relating the virtues and death of Macrinus's wife, expresses himself thus: 'I shall suspend my advice to this best of friends, until he is made capable

of receiving it by those three great remedies—*Necessitas ipsa, dies longa, et satietas doloris*—the necessity of submission, length of time, and satiety of grief.'

In the meantime, I cannot but consider, with much commiseration, the melancholy state of one who has had such a part of himself torn from him, and which he misses in every circumstance of life. His condition is like that of one who has lately lost his right arm, and is every moment offering to help himself with it. He does not appear to himself the same person in his house, at his table, in company, or in retirement; and loses the relish of all the pleasures and diversions that were before entertaining to him by her participation of them. The most agreeable objects recall the sorrow for her with whom he used to enjoy them. This additional satisfaction, from the taste of pleasures in the society of one we love, is admirably described in Milton, who represents Eve, though in Paradise itself, no further pleased with the beautiful objects around her, than as she sees them in company with Adam, in that passage so inexpressibly charming:—

> With thee conversing, I forget all time,
> All seasons and their change; all please alike.
> Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet
> With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun
> When first on this delightful land he spreads
> His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
> Glist'ring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
> After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
> Of grateful evening mild, then silent night,
> With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
> And these the gems of heaven, her starry train:
> But neither breath of morn when she ascends

With charm of earliest birds, nor rising sun
On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glist'ring with dew, nor fragrance after showers,
Nor grateful evening mild, nor silent night,
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
Or glittering starlight, without thee is sweet.

The variety of images in this passage is infinitely pleasing, and the recapitulation of each particular image, with a little varying of the expression, makes one of the finest turns of words that I have ever seen; which I rather mention, because Mr. Dryden has said, in his preface to *Juvenal*, that he could meet with no turn of words in Milton.

It may be further observed, that though the sweetness of these verses has something in it of a pastoral, yet it excels the ordinary kind, as much as the scene of it is above an ordinary field or meadow. I might here, since I am accidentally led into this subject, show several passages in Milton that have as excellent turns of this nature as any of our English poets whatsoever; but shall only mention that which follows, in which he describes the fallen angels engaged in the intricate disputes of predestination, free-will, and foreknowledge; and, to humour the perplexity, makes a kind of labyrinth in the very words that describe it.

Others apart sat on a hill retir'd,
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
Of Providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate,
Fix'd fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost.

[*Tatler*, No. 114.

Mr. Bickerstaff has a Day with his Nephews

THE vigilance, the anxiety, the tenderness, which I have for the good people of England, I am persuaded, will in time be much commended; but I doubt whether they will be ever rewarded. However, I must go on cheerfully in my work of reformation: that being my great design, I am studious to prevent my labours increasing upon me; therefore am particularly observant of the temper and inclinations of childhood and youth, that we may not give vice and folly supplies from the growing generation. It is hardly to be imagined how useful this study is, and what great evils or benefits arise from putting us in our tender years to what we are fit and unfit: therefore, on Tuesday last (with a design to sound their inclinations) I took three lads, who are under my guardianship, a-rambling in a hackney-coach, to show them the town; as the lions, the tombs, Bedlam, and the other places which are entertainments to raw minds, because they strike forcibly on the fancy. The boys are brothers, one of sixteen, the other of fourteen, the other of twelve. The first was his father's darling, the second his mother's, and the third mine, who am their uncle. Mr. William is a lad of true genius; but, being at the upper end of

a great school, and having all the boys below him, his arrogance is insupportable. If I begin to show a little of my Latin, he immediately interrupts: 'Uncle, under favour, that which you say, is not understood in that manner.' 'Brother,' says my boy Jack, 'you do not show your manners much in contradicting my Uncle Isaac!' 'You queer cur,' says Mr. William, 'do you think my uncle takes any notice of such a dull rogue as you are?' Mr. William goes on, 'He is the most stupid of all my mother's children: he knows nothing of his book: when he should mind that, he is hiding or hoarding his taws and marbles, or laying up farthings. His way of thinking is, four-and-twenty farthings make sixpence, and two sixpences a shilling; two shillings and sixpence half a crown, and two half-crowns five shillings. So within these two months the close hunks has scraped up twenty shillings, and we will make him spend it all before he comes home.' Jack immediately claps his hands into both pockets, and turns as pale as ashes. There is nothing touches a parent (and such I am to Jack) so nearly as a provident conduct. This lad has in him the true temper for a good husband, a kind father, and an honest executor. All the great people you see make considerable figures on the exchange, in court, and sometimes in senates, are such as in reality have no greater faculty than what may be called human instinct, which is a natural tendency to their own preservation and that of their friends, without being capable of striking out the road for adventurers. There is Sir William Scrip was of this sort of capacity from his childhood; he has bought the country round him, and makes a bargain better than Sir Harry Wildfire, with

all his wit and humour. Sir Harry never wants money but he comes to Scrip, laughs at him half an hour, and then gives bond for the other thousand. The close men are incapable of placing merit anywhere but in their pence, and therefore gain it; while others, who have larger capacities, are diverted from the pursuit by enjoyments which can be supported only by that cash which they despise; and, therefore, are in the end slaves to their inferiors both in fortune and understanding. I once heard a man of excellent sense observe, that more affairs in the world failed by being in the hands of men of too large capacities for their business, than by being in the conduct of such as wanted abilities to execute them. Jack, therefore, being of a plodding make, shall be a citizen: and I design him to be the refuge of the family in their distress, as well as their jest in prosperity. His brother Will shall go to Oxford with all speed, where, if he does not arrive at being a man of sense, he will soon be informed wherein he is a coxcomb. There is in that place such a true spirit of raillery and humour, that if they cannot make you a wise man, they will certainly let you know you are a fool; which is all my cousin wants, to cease to be so. Thus, having taken these two out of the way, I have leisure to look at my third lad. I observe in the young rogue a natural subtlety of mind, which discovers itself rather in forbearing to declare his thoughts on any occasion, than in any visible way of exerting himself in discourse. For which reason I will place him, where, if he commits no faults, he may go farther than those in other stations, though they excel in virtues. The boy is well-fashioned, and will easily fall into a graceful

manner; wherefore, I have a design to make him a page to a great lady of my acquaintance; by which means he will be well skilled in the common modes of life, and make a greater progress in the world by that knowledge, than with the greatest qualities without it. A good mien in a court, will carry a man greater lengths than a good understanding in any other place. We see a world of pains taken, and the best years of life spent in collecting a set of thoughts in a college for the conduct of life, and, after all, the man so qualified shall hesitate in a speech to a good suit of clothes, and want common sense before an agreeable woman. Hence it is, that wisdom, valour, justice, and learning, cannot keep a man in countenance that is possessed with these excellencies, if he wants that inferior art of life and behaviour, called good-breeding. A man endowed with great perfections, without this, is like one who has his pockets full of gold, but always wants change for his ordinary occasions.

Will Courtly is a living instance of this truth, and has had the same education which I am giving my nephew. He never spoke a thing but what was said before, and yet can converse with the wittiest men without being ridiculous. Among the learned, he does not appear ignorant; nor with the wise, indiscreet. Living in conversation from his infancy, makes him nowhere at a loss; and a long familiarity with the persons of men, is, in a manner, of the same service to him, as if he knew their arts. As ceremony is the invention of wise men to keep fools at a distance, so good-breeding is an expedient to make fools and wise men equals.

[*Tatler*, No. 30.

Mr. Bickerstaff gives a Dinner to his Nephews

HAVING yesterday morning received a paper of Latin verses, written with very much elegance in honour of these my papers, and being informed at the same time, that they were composed by a youth under age, I read them with much delight, as an instance of his improvement. There is not a greater pleasure to old age, than seeing young people entertain themselves in such a manner as that we can partake of their enjoyments. On such occasions we flatter ourselves that we are not quite laid aside in the world; but that we are either used with gratitude for what we were, or honoured for what we are. A well-inclined young man, and whose good-breeding is founded upon the principles of nature and virtue, must needs take delight in being agreeable to his elders, as we are truly delighted when we are not the jest of them. When I say this, I must confess I cannot but think it a very lamentable thing, that there should be a necessity for making that a rule of life, which should be, methinks, a mere instinct of nature. If reflection upon a man in poverty, whom we once knew in riches, is an argument of commiseration with generous minds; sure old age, which is a decay from that vigour which the young

possess, and must certainly, if not prevented against their will, arrive at, should be more forcibly the object of that reverence which honest spirits are inclined to, from a sense of being themselves liable to what they observe has already overtaken others.

My three nephews, whom, in June last was twelvemonth, I disposed of according to their several capacities and inclinations; the first to the university, the second to a merchant, and the third to a woman of quality as her page, by my invitation dined with me to-day. It is my custom often, when I have a mind to give myself a more than ordinary cheerfulness, to invite a certain young gentlewoman of our neighbourhood to make one of the company. She did me that favour this day. The presence of a beautiful woman of honour, to minds which are not trivially disposed, displays an alacrity which is not to be communicated by any other object. It was not unpleasant to me, to look into her thoughts of the company she was in. She smiled at the party of pleasure I had thought of for her, which was composed of an old man and three boys. My scholar, my citizen, and myself, were very soon neglected; and the young courtier, by the bow he made to her at her entrance, engaged her observation without a rival. I observed the Oxonian not a little discomposed at this preference, while the trader kept his eye upon his uncle. My nephew Will had a thousand secret resolutions to break in upon the discourse of his younger brother, who gave my fair companion a full account of the fashion, and what was reckoned most becoming to this complexion, and what sort of habit appeared best upon the other shape. He proceeded

to acquaint her, who of quality was well or sick within the bills of mortality, and named very familiarly all his lady's acquaintance, not forgetting her very words when he spoke of their characters. Besides all this, he had a road of flattery; and upon her inquiring what sort of woman Lady Lovely was in her person, 'Really, madam,' says the Jackanapes, 'she is exactly of your height and shape; but, as you are fair, she is a brown woman.' There was no enduring that this fop should outshine us all at this unmerciful rate; therefore I thought fit to talk to my young scholar concerning his studies; and, because I would throw his learning into present service, I desired him to repeat to me the translation he had made of some tender verses in Theocritus. He did so, with an air of elegance peculiar to the college to which I sent him. I made some exceptions to the turn of the phrases; which he defended with much modesty, as believing in that place the matter was rather to consult the softness of a swain's passion, than the strength of his expressions. It soon appeared that Will had outstripped his brother in the opinion of our young lady. A little poetry to one who is bred a scholar, has the same effect that a good carriage of his person has on one who is to live in courts. The favour of women is so natural a passion, that I envied both the boys their success in the approbation of my guest; and I thought the only person invulnerable was my young trader. During the whole meal, I could observe in the children a mutual contempt and scorn of each other, arising from their different way of life and education, and took that occasion to advertise them of such growing distastes; which might mislead them in their future

life, and disappoint their friends, as well as themselves, of the advantages which might be expected from the diversity of their professions and interests.

The prejudices which are growing up between these brothers from the different ways of education, are what create the most fatal misunderstandings in life. But all distinctions of disparagement, merely from our circumstances, are such as will not bear the examination of reason. The courtier, the trader, and the scholar, should all have an equal pretension to the denomination of a gentleman. That tradesman, who deals with me in a commodity which I do not understand, with uprightness, has much more right to that character, than the courtier that gives me false hopes, or the scholar who laughs at my ignorance.

The appellation of gentleman is never to be affixed to a man's circumstances, but to his behaviour in them. For this reason I shall ever, as far as I am able, give my nephews such impressions as shall make them value themselves rather as they are useful to others, than as they are conscious of merit in themselves. There are no qualities for which we ought to pretend to the esteem of others, but such as render us serviceable to them: for 'free men have no superiors but benefactors.' . . .

[*Tatler*, No. 207.

Parents and Children

AMONG those inclinations which are common to all men, there is none more unaccountable than that unequal love by which parents distinguish their children from each other. Sometimes vanity and self-love appear to have a share towards this effect; and in other instances I have been apt to attribute it to mere instinct: but, however that is, we frequently see the child, that has been beholden to neither of these impulses in his parents, in spite of being neglected, snubbed, and thwarted at home, acquire a behaviour which makes him as agreeable to all the rest of the world, as that of every one else of their family is to each other. I fell into this way of thinking from an intimacy which I have with a very good house in our neighbourhood, where there are three daughters of a very different character and genius. The eldest has a great deal of wit and cunning; the second has good sense, but no artifice; the third has much vivacity, but little understanding. The first is a fine, but scornful woman; the second is not charming, but very winning; the third is no way commendable, but very desirable. The father of these young creatures was ever a great pretender to wit, the mother a woman of as much coquetry. This turn in the parents has biassed their affections towards their children. The

old man supposes the eldest of his own genius; and the mother looks upon the youngest as herself renewed. By this means, all the lovers who approach the house are discarded by the father for not observing Mrs. Mary's wit and beauty; and by the mother, for being blind to the mien and air of Mrs. Biddy. Come never so many pretenders, they are not suspected to have the least thought of Mrs. Betty, the middle daughter. Betty, therefore, is mortified into a woman of a great deal of merit, and knows she must depend on that for her advancement. The middlemost is thus the favourite of all her acquaintance, as well as mine; while the other two carry a certain insolence about them in all conversations, and expect the partiality which they meet with at home to attend them wherever they appear. So little do parents understand that they are, of all people, the least judges of their children's merit, that what they reckon such is seldom anything else but a repetition of their own faults and infirmities.

There is, methinks, some excuse for being particular, when one of the offspring has any defect in nature. In this case, the child, if we may so speak, is so much longer the child of its parents, and calls for the continuance of their care and indulgence from the slowness of its capacity, or the weakness of its body. But there is no enduring to see men enamoured only at the sight of their own impertinencies repeated, and to observe, as we may sometimes, that they have a secret dislike of their children for a degeneracy from their very crimes. Commend me to Lady Goodly; she is equal to all her own children, but prefers them to those of all the world beside. My lady is a perfect

hen in the care of her brood; she fights and squabbles with all that appear where they come, but is wholly unbiassed in dispensing her favours among them. It is no small pains she is at to defame all the young women in her neighbourhood, by visits, whispers, intimations, and hearsays; all which she ends with thanking heaven, 'that no one living is so blessed with such obedient and well-inclined children as herself. Perhaps,' she says, 'Betty cannot dance like Mrs. Frontinet, and it is no great matter whether she does or not; but she comes into a room with a good grace; though she says it that should not, she looks like a gentlewoman. Then, if Mrs. Rebecca is not so talkative as the mighty wit Mrs. Clapper, yet she is discreet, she knows better what she says when she does speak. If her wit be slow, her tongue never runs before it.' This kind parent lifts up her eyes and hands in congratulation of her own good fortune, and is maliciously thankful that none of her girls are like any of her neighbours; but this preference of her own to all others is grounded upon an impulse of nature; while those, who like one before another of their own, are so unpardonably unjust, that it could hardly be equalled in the children, though they preferred all the rest of the world to such parents. It is no unpleasant entertainment to see a ball at a dancing-school, and observe the joy of relations when the young ones, for whom they are concerned, are in motion. You need not be told whom the dancers belong to. At their first appearance, the passions of their parents are in their faces, and there is always a nod of approbation stolen at a good step or a graceful turn.

I remember, among all my acquaintance, but one

man whom I have thought to live with his children with equanimity and a good grace. He had three sons and one daughter, whom he bred with all the care imaginable in a liberal and ingenuous way. I have often heard him say, 'he had the weakness to love one much better than the other, but that he took as much pains to correct that as any other criminal passion that could arise in his mind.' His method was, to make it the only pretension in his children to his favour, to be kind to each other; and he would tell them, 'that he who was the best brother, he would reckon the best son.' This turned their thoughts into an emulation for the superiority in kind and tender affection towards each other. The boys behaved themselves very early with a manly friendship; and their sister, instead of the gross familiarities and impertinent freedoms in behaviour usual in other houses, was always treated by them with as much complaisance as any other young lady of their acquaintance. It was an unspeakable pleasure to visit, or sit at a meal, in that family. I have often seen the old man's heart flow at his eyes with joy, upon occasions which would appear indifferent to such as were strangers to the turn of his mind; but a very slight accident, wherein he saw his children's goodwill to one another, created in him the god-like pleasure of loving them because they loved each other. This great command of himself, in hiding his first impulse to partiality, at last improved to a steady justice towards them; and that, which at first was but an expedient to correct his weakness, was afterwards the measure of his virtue.

The truth of it is, those parents who are interested

in the care of one child more than that of another, no longer deserve the name of parents, but are, in effect, as childish as their children, in having such unreasonable and ungoverned inclinations. - A father of this sort has degraded himself into one of his own offspring; for none but a child would take part in the passions of children.

[*Tatler*, No. 235.

Jenny Distaff Marries

My sister Jenny's lover, the honest Tranquillus, for that shall be his name, has been impatient with me to despatch the necessary direction for his marriage; that while I am taken up with imaginary schemes, as he calls them, he might not burn with real desire and the torture of expectation. When I had reprimanded him for the ardour wherein he expressed himself . . . I told him, 'the day of his nuptials should be on the Saturday following, which was the eighth instant.' On the seventh in the evening, poor Jenny came into my chamber, and, having her heart full of the great change of life from a virgin condition to that of a wife, she long sat silent. I saw she expected me to entertain her on this important subject, which was too delicate a circumstance for herself to touch upon; whereupon I relieved her modesty in the following manner: 'Sister,' said I, 'you are now going from me: and be contented that you leave the company of a talkative old man for that of a sober young one: but take this along with you, that there is no mean in the state you are entering into, but you are to be exquisitely happy or miserable, and your fortune in this way of life will be wholly of your own making. In all the marriages I have ever seen, most of which have been unhappy ones, the great cause of evil has proceeded from slight

occasions; and I take it to be the first maxim in a married condition, that you are to be above trifles. When two persons have so good an opinion of each other as to come together for life, they will not differ in matters of importance, because they think of each other with respect, in regard to all things of consideration that may affect them, and are prepared for mutual assistance and relief in such occurrences; but for less occasions, they have formed no resolutions, but leave their minds unprepared.'

'This, dear Jenny, is the reason that the quarrel between Sir Harry Willit and his lady, which began about her squirrel, is irreconcilable. Sir Harry was reading a grave author; she runs into his study, and in a playing humour, claps the squirrel upon the folio: he threw the animal in a rage upon the floor; she snatches it up again, calls Sir Harry a sour pedant, without good nature or good manners. This cast him into such a rage, that he threw down the table before him, kicked the book round the room; then recollected himself: "Lord, madam," said he, "why did you run into such expressions? I was," said he, "in the highest delight with that author, when you clapped your squirrel upon my book"; and, smiling, added upon recollection, "I have a great respect for your favourite, and pray let us all be friends." My lady was so far from accepting this apology, that she immediately conceived a resolution to keep him under for ever: and with a serious air replied, "There is no regard to be had to what a man says who can fall into so indecent a rage and such an abject submission in the same moment, for which I absolutely despise you." Upon which she rushed out of the room. Sir Harry

stayed some minutes behind, to think and command himself; after which he followed her into her bed-chamber, where she was prostrate upon the bed, tearing her hair, and naming twenty coxcombs who would have used her otherwise. This provoked him to so high a degree that he forbore nothing but beating her; and all the servants in their family were at their several stations listening, whilst the best man and woman, the best master and mistress, defamed each other in a way that is not to be repeated even at Billingsgate. You know this ended in an immediate separation: she longs to return home, but knows not how to do it: he invites her home every day. Her husband requires no submission of her; but she thinks her very return will argue she is to blame, which she is resolved to be for ever rather than acknowledge it. Thus, dear Jenny, my great advice to you is, be guarded against giving or receiving little provocations Great matters of offence I have no reason to fear either from you or your husband.'

After this, we turned our discourse into a more gay style, and parted: but before we did so I made her resign her snuff-box for ever, and half drown herself with washing away the stench of the musty.

But the wedding morning arrived, and our family being very numerous, there was no avoiding the inconvenience of making the ceremony and festival more public, than the modern way of celebrating them makes me approve of. The bride next morning came out of her chamber, dressed with all the art and care that Mrs. Toilet, the tire-woman, could bestow on her. She was on her wedding-day three-and-twenty; her person is far from what we call a regular beauty; but

a certain sweetness in her countenance, an ease in her shape and motion, with an unaffected modesty in her looks, had attractions beyond what symmetry and exactness can inspire, without the addition of these endowments. When her lover entered the room, her features flushed with shame and joy; and the ingenious manner, so full of passion and of awe, with which Tranquillus approached to salute her, gave me good omens of his future behaviour towards her. The wedding was wholly under my care. After the ceremony at church, I was resolved to entertain the company with a dinner suitable to the occasion, and pitched upon the Apollo at the Old-Devil at Temple Bar, as a place sacred to mirth tempered with discretion, where Ben Jonson and his sons used to make their liberal meetings. Here the chief of the Staffian race appeared; and as soon as the company were come into that ample room, Lepidus Wagstaff began to make me compliments for choosing that place, and fell into a discourse upon the subject of pleasure and entertainment, drawn from the rules of Ben's club, which are in gold letters over the chimney. Lepidus has a way very uncommon, and speaks on subjects on which any man else would certainly offend, with great dexterity. He gave us a large account of the public meetings of all the well-turned minds who had passed through this life in ages past, and closed his pleasing narrative with a discourse on marriage, and a repetition of the following verses out of Milton :—

> Hail, wedded love, mysterious law, true source
> Of human offspring, sole propriety
> In Paradise, of all things common else!
> By thee adulterous lust was driven from men
> Among the bestial herds to range; by thee

> Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
> Relations dear, and all the charities
> Of father, son, and brother first were known . . .
> Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets,
> Whose bed is undefiled and chaste pronounced,
> Present or past, as saints and patriarchs used.
> Here Love his golden shafts employs; here lights
> His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings:
> Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile
> Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeared,
> Casual fruition; nor in court amours,
> Mixed dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
> Or serenade, which the starved lover sings
> To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.

In these verses, all the images that can come into a young woman's head on such an occasion are raised; but that in so chaste and elegant a manner, that the bride thanked him for his agreeable talk, and we sat down to dinner. . . .

[*Tatler*, No. 79.

Jenny Distaff quarrels with her Husband

My brother Tranquillus, who is a man of business, came to me this morning into my study, and after very many civil expressions in return for what good offices I had done him, told me 'he desired to carry his wife, my sister, that very morning to his own house.' I readily told him, 'I would wait upon him,' without asking why he was so impatient to rob us of his good company. He went out of my chamber, and I thought seemed to have a little heaviness upon him, which gave me some disquiet. Soon after, my sister came to me, with a very matron-like air, and most sedate satisfaction in her looks, which spoke her very much at ease; but the traces of her countenance seemed to discover that she had been lately in a passion, and that air of content to flow from a certain triumph upon some advantage obtained. She no sooner sat down by me, but I perceived she was one of those ladies who begin to be managers within the time of their being brides. Without letting her speak, which I saw she had a mighty inclination to do, I said, 'Here has been your husband, who tells me he has a mind to go home this very morning, and I have consented to it.' 'It is well,' said she, 'for you must know——' 'Nay, Jenny,' said I, 'I beg your pardon.

for it is you must know—You are to understand, that now is the time to fix or alienate your husband's heart for ever; and I fear you have been a little indiscreet in your expressions or behaviour towards him, even here in my house.' 'There has,' says she, 'been some words: but I will be judged by you if he was not in the wrong: nay, I need not be judged by anybody, for he gave it up himself, and said not a word when he saw me grow passionate, but, "Madam, you are perfectly in the right of it": as you shall judge——' 'Nay, madam,' said I, 'I am judge already, and tell you, that you are perfectly in the wrong of it; for if it was a matter of importance, I know he has better sense than you; if a trifle, you know what I told you on your wedding-day, that you were to be above little provocations.' She knows very well I can be sour upon occasion, therefore gave me leave to go on.

'Sister,' said I, 'I will not enter into the dispute between you, which I find his prudence put an end to before it came to extremity; but charge you to have a care of the first quarrel, as you tender your happiness; for then it is that the mind will reflect harshly upon every circumstance that has ever passed between you. If such an accident is ever to happen, which I hope never will, be sure to keep to the circumstance before you; make no allusions to what is passed, or conclusions referring to what is to come: do not show a hoard of matter for dissension in your breast; but, if it is necessary, lay before him the thing as you understand it, candidly, without being ashamed of acknowledging an error, or proud of being in the right. If a young couple be not careful in this point, they will get into a habit of wrangling: and when to displease is

thought of no consequence, to please is always of as little moment. There is a play, Jenny, I have formerly been at when I was a student: we got into a dark corner with a porringer of brandy, and threw raisins into it, then set it on fire. My chamber-fellow and I diverted ourselves with the sport of venturing our fingers for the raisins; and the wantonness of the thing was, to see each other look like a demon, as we burnt ourselves, and snatched out the fruit. This fantastical mirth was called snap-dragon. You may go into many a family, where you see the man and wife at this sport: every word at their table alludes to some passage between themselves; and you see by the paleness and emotion in their countenances, that it is for your sake, and not their own, that they forbear playing out the whole game of burning each other's fingers. In this case, the whole purpose of life is inverted, and the ambition turns upon a certain contention, who shall contradict best, and not upon an inclination to excel in kindness and good offices. Therefore, dear Jenny, remember me, and avoid snap-dragon.'

'I thank you, brother,' said she, 'but you do not know how he loves me; I find I can do anything with him.'—'If you can so, why should you desire to do anything but please him? but I have a word or two more before you go out of the room; for I see you do not like the subject I am upon: let nothing provoke you to fall upon an imperfection he cannot help; for, if he has a resenting spirit, he will think your aversion as immovable as the imperfection with which you upbraid him. But above all, dear Jenny, be careful of one thing, and you will be something more than

woman; that is, a levity you are almost all guilty of, which is, to take a pleasure in your power to give pain. It is even in a mistress an argument of meanness of spirit, but in a wife it is injustice and ingratitude. When a sensible man once observes this in a woman, he must have a very great or very little spirit, to overlook it. A woman ought, therefore, to consider very often, how few men there are who will regard a meditated offence as a weakness of temper.'

I was going on in my confabulation, when Tranquillus entered. She cast all her eyes upon him with much shame and confusion, mixed with great complacency and love, and went up to him. He took her in his arms, and looked so many soft things at one glance, that I could see he was glad I had been talking to her, sorry she had been troubled, and angry at himself that he could not disguise the concern he was in an hour before. After which he says to me, with an air awkward enough, but methought not unbecoming—'I have altered my mind, brother; we will live upon you a day or two longer.' I replied, 'That is what I have been persuading Jenny to ask of you, but she is resolved never to contradict your inclination, and refused me.'

We were going on in that way which one hardly knows how to express; as when two people mean the same thing in a nice case, but come at it by talking as distantly from it as they can; when very opportunely came in upon us an honest inconsiderable fellow, Tim Dapper, a gentleman well known to us both. Tim is one of those who are very necessary, by being very inconsiderable. Tim dropped in at an incident, when we knew not how to fall into either a grave or a merry

way. My sister took this occasion to make off, and Dapper gave us an account of all the company he had been in to-day, who was, and who was not at home, where he visited. This Tim is the head of a species: he is a little out of his element in this town; but he is a relation of Tranquillus, and his neighbour in the country, which is the true place of residence for this species. The habit of a Dapper, when he is at home, is a light broadcloth, with calamanco or red waistcoat and breeches; and it is remarkable that their wigs seldom hide the collar of their coats. They have always a peculiar spring in their arms, a wriggle in their bodies, and a trip in their gait. All which motions they express at once in their drinking, bowing, or saluting ladies; for a distant imitation of a forward fop, and a resolution to overtop him in his way, are the distinguishing marks of a Dapper. These under-characters of men, are parts of the sociable world by no means to be neglected: they are like pegs in a building; they make no figure in it, but hold the structure together, and are as absolutely necessary as the pillars and columns. I am sure we found it so this morning; for Tranquillus and I should, perhaps, have looked cold at each other the whole day, but Dapper fell in with his brisk way, shook us both by the hand, rallied the bride, mistook the acceptance he met with amongst us for extraordinary perfection in himself, and heartily pleased, and was pleased, all the while he stayed. His company left us all in good humour, and we were not such fools as to let it sink, before we confirmed it by great cheerfulness and openness in our carriage the whole evening.

[*Tatler*, No. 85.

HUMOURS OF THE TOWN

The Trumpet Club and its Members

AFTER having applied my mind with more than ordinary attention to my studies, it is my usual custom to relax and unbend it in the conversation of such as are rather easy than shining companions. This I find particularly necessary for me before I retire to rest, in order to draw my slumbers upon me by degrees, and fall asleep insensibly. This is the particular use I make of a set of heavy, honest men, with whom I have passed many hours with much indolence, though not with great pleasure. Their conversation is a kind of preparative for sleep: it takes the mind down from its abstractions, leads it into the familiar traces of thought, and lulls it into that state of tranquillity, which is the condition of a thinking man when he is but half awake. After this, my readers will not be surprised to hear the account which I am about to give of a club of my own contemporaries, among whom I pass two or three hours every evening. This I look upon as taking my first nap before I go to bed. The truth of it is, I should think myself unjust to posterity, as well as to the society at the Trumpet, of which I am a member, did not I in some part of my writings give an account of the persons among whom I have passed almost a sixth part of my time for these last forty years. Our club

consisted originally of fifteen; but, partly by the severity of the law in arbitrary times, and partly by the natural effects of old age, we are at present reduced to a third part of that number; in which, however, we have this consolation, that the best company is said to consist of five persons. I must confess, besides the aforementioned benefit which I meet with in the conversation of this select society, I am not the less pleased with the company, in that I find myself the greatest wit among them, and am heard as their oracle in all points of learning and difficulty.

Sir Jeffrey Notch, who is the oldest of the club, has been in possession of the right-hand chair time out of mind, and is the only man among us that has the liberty of stirring the fire. This, our foreman, is a gentleman of an ancient family, that came to a great estate some years before he had discretion, and run it out in hounds, horses, and cock-fighting; for which reason he looks upon himself as an honest, worthy gentleman, who has had misfortunes in the world, and calls every thriving man a pitiful upstart.

Major Matchlock is the next senior, who served in the last civil wars, and has all the battles by heart. He does not think any action in Europe worth talking of since the fight of Marston Moor; and every night tells us of his having been knocked off his horse at the rising of the London apprentices; for which he is in great esteem among us.

Honest old Dick Reptile is the third of our society. He is a good-natured indolent man, who speaks little himself, but laughs at our jokes; and brings his young nephew along with him, a youth of eighteen years old,

to show him good company, and give him a taste of the world. This young fellow sits generally silent; but whenever he opens his mouth, or laughs at anything that passes, he is constantly told by his uncle, after a jocular manner, 'Ay, ay, Jack, you young men think us fools; but we old men know you are.'

The greatest wit of our company, next to myself, is a bencher of the neighbouring inn, who in his youth frequented the ordinaries about Charing Cross, and pretends to have been intimate with Jack Ogle. He has about ten distichs of *Hudibras* without book, and never leaves the club until he has applied them all. If any modern wit be mentioned, or any town-frolic spoken of, he shakes his head at the dulness of the present age, and tells us a story of Jack Ogle.

For my own part, I am esteemed among them, because they see I am something respected by others; though at the same time I understand by their behaviour, that I am considered by them as a man of a great deal of learning, but no knowledge of the world; insomuch, that the major sometimes, in the height of his military pride, calls me the Philosopher: and Sir Jeffrey, no longer ago than last night, upon a dispute what day of the month it was then in Holland, pulled his pipe out of his mouth, and cried, 'What does the scholar say to it?'

Our club meets precisely at six o'clock in the evening; but I did not come last evening until half an hour after seven, by which means I escaped the battle of Naseby, which the major usually begins at about three-quarters after six: I found also, that my good friend the bencher had already spent three of his distichs; and only waited an opportunity to hear

a sermon spoken of, that he might introduce the couplet where 'a stick' rhymes to 'ecclesiastic.' At my entrance into the room, they were naming a red petticoat and a cloak, by which I found that the bencher had been diverting them with a story of Jack Ogle.

I had no sooner taken my seat, but Sir Jeffrey, to show his goodwill towards me, gave me a pipe of his own tobacco, and stirred up the fire. I look upon it as a point of morality, to be obliged by those who endeavour to oblige me; and therefore, in requital for his kindness, and to set the conversation a-going, I took the best occasion I could to put him upon telling us the story of old Gauntlett, which he always does with very particular concern. He traced up his descent on both sides for several generations, describing his diet and manner of life, with his several battles, and particularly that in which he fell. This Gauntlett was a gamecock, upon whose head the knight, in his youth, had won five hundred pounds, and lost two thousand. This naturally set the major upon the account of Edgehill fight, and ended in a duel of Jack Ogle's.

Old Reptile was extremely attentive to all that was said, though it was the same he had heard every night for these twenty years, and, upon all occasions, winked upon his nephew to mind what passed.

This may suffice to give the world a taste of our innocent conversation, which we spun out until about ten of the clock, when my maid came with a lantern to light me home. I could not but reflect with myself, as I was going out, upon the talkative humour of old men, and the little figure which that part of life makes

in one who cannot employ his natural propensity in discourses which would make him venerable. I must own, it makes me very melancholy in company, when I hear a young man begin a story; and have often observed, that one of a quarter of an hour long in a man of five-and-twenty, gathers circumstances every time he tells it, until it grows into a long Canterbury tale of two hours by that time he is threescore.

The only way of avoiding such a trifling and frivolous old age is, to lay up in our way to it such stores of knowledge and observation, as may make us useful and agreeable in our declining years. The mind of man in a long life will become a magazine of wisdom or folly, and will consequently discharge itself in something impertinent or improving. For which reason, as there is nothing more ridiculous than an old trifling storyteller, so there is nothing more venerable, than one who has turned his experience to the entertainment and advantage of mankind.

In short, we, who are in the last stage of life, and are apt to indulge ourselves in talk, ought to consider if what we speak be worth being heard, and endeavour to make our discourse like that of Nestor, which Homer compares to the flowing of honey for its sweetness.

I am afraid I shall be thought guilty of this excess I am speaking of, when I cannot conclude without observing, that Milton certainly thought of this passage in Homer, when, in his description of an eloquent spirit, he says,

His tongue dropped manna.

[*Tatler*, No. 132.

A Defence of Ugliness

SINCE our persons are not of our own making, when they are such as appear defective or uncomely, it is, methinks, an honest and laudable fortitude to dare to be ugly; at least to keep ourselves from being abashed with a consciousness of imperfections which we cannot help, and in which there is no guilt. I would not defend a haggard beau for passing away much time at a glass, and giving softness and languishing graces to deformity: all I contend is, that we ought to be contented with our countenance and shape, so far, as never to give ourselves an uneasy reflection on that subject. It is to the ordinary people, who are not accustomed to make very proper remarks on any occasion, matter of great jest, if a man enters with a prominent pair of shoulders into an assembly, or is distinguished by an expansion of mouth, or obliquity of aspect. It is happy for a man that has any of these oddnesses about him, if he can be as merry upon himself, as others are apt to be upon that occasion. When he can possess himself with such a cheerfulness, women and children, who are at first frighted at him, will afterwards be as much pleased with him. As it is barbarous in others to rally him for natural defects, it is extremely agreeable when he can jest upon himself for them.

Madam Maintenon's first husband was a hero in this kind, and has drawn many pleasantries from the irregularity of his shape, which he describes as very much resembling the letter Z. He diverts himself likewise by representing to his reader the make of an engine and pulley, with which he used to take off his hat. When there happens to be anything ridiculous in a visage, and the owner thinks it an aspect of dignity, he must be of very great quality to be exempt from raillery. The best expedient, therefore, is to be pleasant upon himself. Prince Harry and Falstaff, in Shakspeare, have carried the ridicule upon fat and lean as far as it will go. Falstaff is humorously called woolsack, bedpresser, and hill of flesh; Harry, a starveling, an elves-skin, a sheath, a bow-case, and a tuck. There is, in several incidents of the conversation between them, the jest still kept up upon the person. Great tenderness and sensibility in this point is one of the greatest weaknesses of self-love. For my own part, I am a little unhappy in the mould of my face, which is not quite so long as it is broad. Whether this might not partly arise from my opening my mouth much seldomer than other people, and by consequence not so much lengthening the fibres of my visage, I am not at leisure to determine. However it be, I have been often put out of countenance by the shortness of my face, and was formerly at great pains in concealing it by wearing a periwig with a high foretop, and letting my beard grow. But now I have thoroughly got over this delicacy, and could be contented with a much shorter, provided it might qualify me for a member of the merry club, which the following letter gives me an account of. I have received it

from Oxford, and as it abounds with the spirit of mirth and good-humour, which is natural to that place, I shall set it down word for word as it came to me.

'MOST PROFOUND SIR,

'Having been very well entertained, in the last of your speculations that I have yet seen, by your specimen upon clubs, which I therefore hope you will continue, I shall take the liberty to furnish you with a brief account of such a one as, perhaps, you have not seen in your travels, unless it was your fortune to touch upon some of the woody parts of the African continent, in your journey to or from Grand Cairo. There have arose in this university (long since you left us without saying anything) several of these inferior hebdomadal societies, as the Punning Club, the Witty Club, and amongst the rest, the Handsome Club; as a burlesque upon which, a certain merry species, that seem to have come into the world in masquerade, for some years last past have associated themselves together, and assumed the name of the Ugly Club. This ill-favoured fraternity consists of a president and twelve fellows; the choice of which is not confined by patent to any particular foundation (as St. John's men would have the world believe, and have therefore erected a separate society within themselves), but liberty is left to elect from any school in Great Britain, provided the candidates be within the rules of the club, as set forth in a table, entitled, The Act of Deformity: a clause or two of which I shall transmit to you.

'1. That no person whatsoever shall be admitted without a visible queerity in his aspect, or peculiar

cast of countenance; of which the president and officers for the time being are to determine, and the president to have the casting voice.

'2. That a singular regard be had upon examination to the gibbosity of the gentlemen that offer themselves as founder's kinsmen; or to the obliquity of their figure, in what sort soever.

'3. That if the quantity of any man's nose be eminently miscalculated, whether as to length or breadth, he shall have a just pretence to be elected.

'Lastly, That if there shall be two or more competitors for the same vacancy, *cæteris paribus*, he that has the thickest skin to have the preference.

'Every fresh member, upon his first night, is to entertain the company with a dish of cod-fish, and a speech in praise of Æsop, whose portraiture they have in full proportion, or rather disproportion, over the chimney; and their design is, as soon as their funds are sufficient, to purchase the heads of Thersites, Duns Scotus, Scarron, Hudibras, and the old gentleman in Oldham, with all the celebrated ill faces of antiquity, as furniture for the club-room.

'As they have always been professed admirers of the other sex, so they unanimously declare that they will give all possible encouragement to such as will take the benefit of the statute, though none yet have appeared to do it.

'The worthy president, who is their most devoted champion, has lately shown me two copies of verses, composed by a gentleman of his society; the first, a congratulatory ode, inscribed to Mrs. Touchwood, upon the loss of her two fore teeth; the other, a panegyric upon Mrs. Andiron's left shoulder. Mrs. Vizard,

he says, since the small-pox, has grown tolerably ugly, and a top toast in the club; but I never heard him so lavish of his fine things, as upon old Nell Trot, who continually officiates at their table; her he even adores and extols as the very counterpart of Mother Shipton; in short, Nell, says he, is one of the extraordinary works of nature; but as for complexion, shape, and features, so valued by others, they are all mere outside and symmetry, which is his aversion. Give me leave to add, that the president is a facetious, pleasant gentleman, and never more so, than when he has got, as he calls them, his dear mummers about him; and he often protests it does him good to meet a fellow with a right genuine grimace in his air (which is so agreeable in the generality of the French nation); and, as an instance of his sincerity in this particular, he gave me a sight of a list in his pocket-book of all this class, who for these five years have fallen under his observation, with himself at the head of them, and in the rear (as one of a promising and improving aspect),

'Sir, your obliged and humble servant,

'ALEXANDER CARBUNCLE.

'OXFORD, *March* 12, 1711.'

[*Spectator*, No. 17.

A Coffee-house and its Frequenters

It is very natural for a man who is not turned for mirthful meetings of men, or assemblies of the fair sex, to delight in that sort of conversation which we find in coffee-houses. Here a man of my temper is in his element; for if he cannot talk, he can still be more agreeable to his company, as well as pleased in himself, in being only a hearer. It is a secret known but to few, yet of no small use in the conduct of life, that when you fall into a man's conversation, the first thing you should consider is, whether he has a great inclination to hear you, or that you should hear him. The latter is the more general desire, and I know very able flatterers that never speak a word in praise of the persons from whom they obtain daily favours, but still practise a skilful attention to whatever is uttered by those with whom they converse. We are very curious to observe the behaviour of great men and their clients; but the same passions and interests move men in lower spheres; and I, that have nothing else to do but make observations, see in every parish, street, lane, and alley, of this populous city, a little potentate that has his court and his flatterers, who lay snares for his affection and favour by the same arts that are practised upon men in higher stations.

In the place I most usually frequent, men differ

rather in the time of day in which they make a figure, than in any real greatness above one another. I, who am at the coffee-house at six in the morning, know that my friend Beaver, the haberdasher, has a levee of more undissembled friends and admirers than most of the courtiers or generals of Great Britain. Every man about him has, perhaps, a newspaper in his hand; but none can pretend to guess what step will be taken in any one court of Europe, till Mr. Beaver has thrown down his pipe, and declares what measures the allies must enter into upon this new posture of affairs. Our coffee-house is near one of the Inns of Court, and Beaver has the audience and admiration of his neighbours from six till within a quarter of eight, at which time he is interrupted by the students of the house; some of whom are ready dressed for Westminster at eight in a morning, with faces as busy as if they were retained in every cause there; and others come in their night-gowns to saunter away their time, as if they never designed to go thither. I do not know that I meet in any of my walks, objects which move both my spleen and laughter so effectually as those young fellows at the Grecian, Squire's, Searle's, and all other coffee-houses adjacent to the law, who rise early for no other purpose but to publish their laziness. One would think these young virtuosos take a gay cap and slippers, with a scarf and party-coloured gown, to be ensigns of dignity; for the vain things approach each other with an air, which shows they regard one another for their vestments. I have observed that the superiority among these proceeds from an opinion of gallantry and fashion. The gentleman in the strawberry sash, who presides so much over the rest, has,

it seems, subscribed to every opera this last winter, and is supposed to receive favours from one of the actresses.

When the day grows too busy for these gentlemen to enjoy any longer the pleasures of their deshabille with any manner of confidence, they give place to men who have business or good sense in their faces, and come to the coffee-house either to transact affairs, or enjoy conversation. The persons to whose behaviour and discourse I have most regard, are such as are between these two sorts of men; such as have not spirits too active to be happy and well pleased in a private condition, nor complexions too warm to make them neglect the duties and relations of life. Of these sort of men consist the worthier part of mankind; of these are all good fathers, generous brothers, friends, and faithful subjects. Their entertainments are derived rather from reason than imagination; which is the cause that there is no impatience or instability in their speech or action. You see in their countenances they are at home, and in quiet possession of their present instant as it passes, without desiring to quicken it by gratifying any passion, or prosecuting any new design. These are the men formed for society, and those little communities which we express by the word neighbourhoods.

The coffee-house is the place of rendezvous to all that live near it, who are thus turned to relish calm and ordinary life. Eubulus presides over the middle hours of the day, when this assembly of men meet together. He enjoys a great fortune handsomely, without launching into expense; and exerts many noble and useful qualities, without appearing in any

public employment. His wisdom and knowledge are serviceable to all that think fit to make use of them; and he does the office of a counsel, a judge, an executor, and a friend, to all his acquaintance, not only without the profits which attend such offices, but also without the deference and homage which are usually paid to them. The giving of thanks is displeasing to him. The greatest gratitude you can show him is, to let him see that you are a better man for his services; and that you are as ready to oblige others, as he is to oblige you.

In the private exigencies of his friends, he lends at legal value considerable sums which he might highly increase by rolling in the public stocks. He does not consider in whose hands his money will improve most, but where it will do most good.

Eubulus has so great an authority in his little diurnal audience, that when he shakes his head at any piece of public news, they all of them appear dejected; and on the contrary, go home to their dinners with a good stomach and cheerful aspect when Eubulus seems to intimate that things go well. Nay, their veneration towards him is so great, that when they are in other company they speak and act after him; are wise in his sentences, and are no sooner sat down at their own tables, but they hope or fear, rejoice or despond, as they saw him do at the coffee-house. In a word, every man is Eubulus as soon as his back is turned.

Having here given an account of the several reigns that succeed each other from daybreak till dinner-time, I shall mention the monarchs of the afternoon on another occasion, and shut up the whole series of them with the history of Tom the Tyrant; who, as the

first minister of the coffee-house, takes the government upon him between the hours of eleven and twelve at night, and gives his orders in the most arbitrary manner to the servants below him, as to the disposition of liquors, coal, and cinders.

[*Spectator*, No. 49.

Pests of the Coffee-houses

My correspondents assure me that the enormities which they lately complained of, and I published an account of, are so far from being amended, that new evils arise every day to interrupt their conversation, in contempt of my reproofs. My friend who writes from the coffee-house near the Temple, informs me that the gentleman who constantly sings a voluntary in spite of the whole company, was more musical than ordinary after reading my paper; and has not been contented with that, but has danced up to the glass in the middle of the room, and practised minuet steps to his own humming. The incorrigible creature has gone still further, and in the open coffee-house, with one hand extended as leading a lady in it, he has danced both French and country-dances, and admonished his supposed partner by smiles and nods to hold up her head, and fall back, according to the respective facings and evolutions of the dance. Before this gentleman began this his exercise, he was pleased to clear his throat by coughing and spitting a full half-hour; and as soon as he struck up, he appealed to an attorney's clerk in the room, whether he hit as he ought 'Since you from death have saved me'? and then asked the young fellow, pointing to a chancery-bill under his arm, whether that was an opera-score he carried or

not? Without staying for an answer he fell into the exercise above mentioned, and practised his airs to the full house who were turned upon him, without the least shame or repentance for his former transgressions.

I am to the last degree at a loss what to do with this young fellow, except I declare him an outlaw, and pronounce it penal for any one to speak to him in the said house which he frequents, and direct that he be obliged to drink his tea and coffee without sugar, and not receive from any person whatsoever anything above mere necessaries.

As we in England are a sober people, and generally inclined rather to a certain bashfulness of behaviour in public, it is amazing whence some fellows come whom one meets with in this town; they do not at all seem to be the growth of our island; the pert, the talkative, all such as have no sense of the observations of others, are certainly of foreign extraction. As for my part, I am as much surprised when I see a talkative Englishman, as I should be to see the Indian pine growing on one of our quickset hedges. Where these creatures get sun enough, to make them such lively animals and dull men, is above my philosophy.

There are another kind of impertinents which a man is perplexed with in mixed company, and those are your loud speakers: these treat mankind as if we were all deaf; they do not express but declare themselves. Many of these are guilty of this outrage out of vanity, because they think all they say is well; or that they have their own persons in such veneration, that they believe nothing which concerns them can be

insignificant to anybody else. For these people's sake, I have often lamented that we cannot close our ears with as much ease as we can our eyes: it is very uneasy that we must necessarily be under persecution. Next to these bawlers is a troublesome creature who comes with the air of your friend and your intimate, and that is your whisperer. There is one of them at a coffee-house which I myself frequent, who observing me to be a man pretty well made for secrets, gets by me, and with a whisper tells me things which all the town knows. It is no very hard matter to guess at the source of this impertinence, which is nothing else but a method or mechanic art of being wise. You never see any frequent in it, whom you can suppose to have anything in the world to do. These persons are worse than bawlers, as much as a secret enemy is more dangerous than a declared one. I wish this my coffee-house friend would take this for an intimation, that I have not heard one word he has told me for these several years; whereas he now thinks me the most trusty repository of his secrets. The whisperers have a pleasant way of ending the close conversation, with saying aloud, 'Do not you think so?' Then whisper again, and then aloud, 'But you know that person'; then whisper again. The thing would be well enough, if they whispered to keep the folly of what they say among friends; but alas they do it to preserve the importance of their thoughts. I am sure I could name you more than one person whom no man living ever heard talk upon any subject in nature, or ever saw in his whole life with a book in his hand, that, I know not how, can whisper something like knowledge of what has and does pass in the world;

which you would think he learned from some familiar spirit that did not think him worthy to receive the whole story. But in truth whisperers deal only in half accounts of what they entertain you with. A great help to their discourse is, 'That the town says, and people begin to talk very freely, and they had it from persons too considerable to be named, what they will tell you when things are riper.' My friend has winked upon me any day since I came to town last, and has communicated to me as a secret, that he designed in a very short time to tell me a secret; but I shall know what he means, he now assures me, in less than a fortnight's time.

But I must not omit the dearer part of mankind, I mean the ladies, to take up a whole paper upon grievances which concern the men only; but shall humbly propose, that we change fools for an experiment only. A certain set of ladies complain they are frequently perplexed with a visitant who affects to be wiser than they are; which character he hopes to preserve by an obstinate gravity, and great guard against discovering his opinion upon any occasion whatsoever. A painful silence has hitherto gained him no further advantage, than that as he might, if he had behaved himself with freedom, been excepted against but as to this and that particular, he now offends in the whole. To relieve these ladies, my good friends and correspondents, I shall exchange my dancing outlaw for their dumb visitant, and assign the silent gentleman all the haunts of the dancer; in order to which, I have sent them by the penny-post the following letters for their conduct in their new conversations:—

'SIR,

'I have, you may be sure, heard of your irregularities without regard to my observations upon you; but shall not treat you with so much rigour as you deserve. If you will give yourself the trouble to repair to the place mentioned in the postscript to this letter at seven this evening, you will be conducted into a spacious room well lighted, where there are ladies and music. You will see a young lady laughing next the window to the street; you may take her out, for she loves you as well as she does any man, tho' she never saw you before. She never thought in her life, any more than yourself. She will not be surprised when you accost her, nor concerned when you leave her. Hasten from a place where you are laughed at, to one where you will be admired. You are of no consequence, therefore go where you will be welcome for being so.

'Your most humble servant.'

'SIR,

'The ladies whom you visit, think a wise man the most impertinent creature living, therefore you cannot be offended that they are displeased with you. Why will you take pains to appear wise, where you would not be the more esteemed for being really so? Come to us; forget the gigglers; and let your inclination go along with you whether you speak or are silent; and let all such women as are in a clan or sisterhood, go their own way; there is no room for you in that company who are of the common taste of the sex.

For women born to be controll'd
Stoop to the forward and the bold ;
Affect the haughty, and the proud,
The gay, the frolic, and the loud.'

[*Spectator*, No. 148.

Don Quixote in the Coffee-houses

WHEN we look into the delightful history of the most ingenious Don Quixote of the Mancha, and consider the exercises and manner of life of that renowned gentleman, we cannot but admire the exquisite genius and discerning spirit of Michael Cervantes; who has not only painted his adventurer with great mastery in the conspicuous parts of his story, which relate to love and honour; but also intimated in his ordinary life, in his economy and furniture, the infallible symptoms he gave of his growing frenzy, before he declared himself a Knight Errant. His hall was furnished with old lances, halberds, and morions; his food, lentils; his dress, amorous. He slept moderately, rose early, and spent his time in hunting. When by watchfulness and exercise he was thus qualified for the hardships of his intended peregrinations, he had nothing more to do but to fall hard to study; and before he should apply himself to the practical part, get into the methods of making love and war by reading books of knighthood. As for raising tender passions in him, Cervantes reports that he was wonderfully delighted with a smooth intricate sentence; and when they listened at his study-door, they could frequently hear him read aloud, 'The reason of the unreasonableness, which against my reason is wrought, doth so weaken my

reason, as with all reason I do justly complain of your beauty.' Again, he would pause until he came to another charming sentence, and, with the most pleasing accent imaginable, be loud at a new paragraph: 'The high heavens, which with your divinity, do fortify you divinely with the stars, make you deserveress of the deserts that your greatness deserves.' With these and other such passages, says my author, the poor gentleman grew distracted, and was breaking his brains day and night to understand and unravel their sense.

As much as the case of this distempered knight is received by all the readers of his history as the most incurable and ridiculous of all frenzies; it is very certain, we have crowds among us far gone in as visible a madness as his, though they are not observed to be in that condition. As great and useful discoveries are sometimes made by accidental and small beginnings, I came to the knowledge of the most epidemic ill of this sort, by falling into a coffee-house, where I saw my friend the upholsterer, whose crack towards politics I have heretofore mentioned. This touch in the brain of the British subject is as certainly owing to the reading newspapers, as that of the Spanish worthy above-mentioned to the reading works of chivalry. My contemporaries, the novelists, have, for the better spinning out paragraphs, and working down to the end of their columns, a most happy art in saying and unsaying, giving hints of intelligence, and interpretations of indifferent actions, to the great disturbance of the brains of ordinary readers. This way of going on in the words, and making no progress in the sense, is more particularly the excellency of my

most ingenious and renowned fellow-labourer, the *Postman:* and it is to this talent in him that I impute the loss of my upholsterer's intellects. That unfortunate tradesman has, for years past, been the chief orator in ragged assemblies, and the reader in alley coffee-houses. He was yesterday surrounded by an audience of that sort, among whom I sat unobserved, through the favour of a cloud of tobacco, and saw him with the *Postman* in his hand, and all the other papers safe under his elbow. He was intermixing remarks, and reading the Paris article of May the thirtieth, which says, 'That it is given out that an express arrived this day with advice, that the armies were so near in the plain of Lens, that they cannonaded each other.' 'Ay, ay, here we shall have sport.' 'And that it was highly probable the next express would bring us an account of an engagement.' 'They are welcome as soon as they please.' 'Though some others say that the same will be put off until the second or third of June, because the Marshal Villars expects some further reinforcements from Germany, and other parts, before that time.' 'What does he put it off for? Does he think our horse is not marching up at the same time? But let us see what he says further.' 'They hope that Monsieur Albergotti, being encouraged by the presence of so great an army, will make an extraordinary defence.' 'Why then, I find Albergotti is one of those that love to have a great many on their side. Nay, I say that for this paper, he makes the most natural inferences of any of them all.' 'The Elector of Bavaria, being uneasy to be without any command, has desired leave to come to court, to communicate a certain project to his majesty.

——Whatever it be, it is said, that prince is suddenly expected; and then we shall have a more certain account of his project, if this report has any foundation.' 'Nay, this paper never imposes upon us; he goes upon sure grounds; for he will not be positive the Elector has a project, or that he will come, or if he does come at all; for he doubts, you see, whether the report has any foundation.'

What makes this the more lamentable is, that this way of writing falls in with the imaginations of the cooler and duller part of her Majesty's subjects. The being kept up with one line contradicting another; and the whole, after many sentences of conjecture, vanishing in a doubt whether there is anything at all in what the person has been reading, puts an ordinary head into a vertigo, which his natural dulness would have secured him from. Next to the labours of the *Postman*, the upholsterer took from under his elbow honest Ichabod Dawks's Letter, and there, among other speculations, the historian takes upon him to say, 'That it is discoursed that there will be a battle in Flanders before the armies separate, and many will have it to be to-morrow, the great battle of Ramillies being fought on a Whitsunday.' A gentleman, who was a wag in this company, laughed at the expression, and said, 'By Mr. Dawks's favour, I warrant you, if we meet them on Whitsunday or Monday we shall not stand upon the day with them, whether it be before or after the holidays.' An admirer of this gentleman stood up, and told a neighbour at a distant table the conceit; at which indeed we were all very merry. These reflections, in the writers of the transactions of the times, seize the noddles of such as were not born

to have thoughts of their own, and consequently lay a weight upon everything which they read in print. But Mr. Dawks concluded his paper with a courteous sentence, which was very well taken and applauded by the whole company. 'We wish,' says he, 'all our customers a merry Whitsuntide and many of them. Honest Ichabod is as extraordinary a man as any of our fraternity, and as particular. His style is a dialect between the familiarity of talking and writing, and his letter such as you cannot distinguish whether print or manuscript, which gives us a refreshment of the idea from what has been told us from the press by others. This wishing a good Tide had its effect upon us, and he was commended for his salutation, as showing as well the capacity of a bellman as a historian. My distempered old acquaintance read, in the next place, the account of the affairs abroad in the *Courant:* but the matter was told so distinctly, that these wanderers thought there was no news in it; this paper differing from the rest, as a history from a romance. The tautology, the contradiction, the doubts, and wants of confirmations, are what keep up imaginary entertainments in empty heads and produce neglect of their own affairs, poverty, and bankruptcy, in many of the shop-statesmen; but turn the imaginations of those of a little higher orb into deliriums of dissatisfaction, which is seen in a continual fret upon all that touches their brains, but more particularly upon any advantage obtained by their country, where they are considered as lunatics, and therefore tolerated in their ravings.

What I am now warning the people of is, that the newspapers of this island are as pernicious to weak

heads in England, as ever books of chivalry to Spain; and therefore shall do all that in me lies, with the utmost care and vigilance imaginable, to prevent these growing evils.

[*Tatler*, No. 178.

On Long-winded People

BOCCALINI, in his *Parnassus*, indicts a laconic writer for speaking that in three words which he might have said in two, and sentences him for his punishment to read over all the works of Guicciardini. This Guicciardini is so very prolix and circumstantial in his writings, that I remember our countryman, Doctor Donne, speaking of that majestic and concise manner in which Moses has described the creation of the world, adds, 'that if such an author as Guicciardini were to have written on such a subject, the world itself would not have been able to have contained the books that gave the history of its creation.'

I look upon a tedious talker, or what is generally known by the name of a story-teller, to be much more insufferable than even a prolix writer. An author may be tossed out of your hand, and thrown aside when he grows dull and tiresome; but such liberties are so far from being allowed towards your orators in common conversation, that I have known a challenge sent a person for going out of the room abruptly, and leaving a man of honour in the midst of a dissertation. This evil is at present so very common and epidemical, that there is scarce a coffee-house in town that has not some speakers belonging to it, who utter their political essays, and draw parallels out of

Baker's *Chronicle*, to almost every part of her Majesty's reign. It was said of two ancient authors, who had very different beauties in their style, 'that if you took a word from one of them, you only spoiled his eloquence; but if you took a word from the other, you spoiled his sense.' I have often applied the first part of this criticism to several of these coffee-house speakers whom I have at present in my thoughts, though the character that is given to the last of those authors, is what I would recommend to the imitation of my loving countrymen. But it is not only public places of resort, but private clubs and conversations over a bottle, that are infested with this loquacious kind of animal, especially with that species which I comprehend under the name of a story-teller. I would earnestly desire these gentlemen to consider, that no point of wit or mirth at the end of a story can atone for the half-hour that has been lost before they come at it. I would likewise lay it home to their serious consideration, whether they think that every man in the company has not a right to speak as well as themselves? and whether they do not think they are invading another man's property, when they engross the time which should be divided equally among the company to their own private use?

What makes this evil the much greater in conversation is, that these humdrum companions seldom endeavour to wind up their narrations into a point of mirth or instruction, which might make some amends for the tediousness of them; but think they have a right to tell anything that has happened within their memory. They look upon matter of fact to be a sufficient foundation for a story, and give us a long

account of things, not because they are entertaining or surprising, but because they are true.

My ingenious kinsman, Mr. Humphry Wagstaff, used to say, 'the life of man is too short for a story-teller.'

Methusalem might be half an hour in telling what o'clock it was: but as for us postdiluvians, we ought to do everything in haste; and in our speeches, as well as actions, remember that our time is short. A man that talks for a quarter of an hour together in company, if I meet him frequently, takes up a great part of my span. A quarter of an hour may be reckoned the eight and fortieth part of a day, a day the three hundred and sixtieth part of a year, and a year the threescore and tenth part of life. By this moral arithmetic, supposing a man to be in the talking world one third part of the day, whoever gives another a quarter of an hour's hearing, makes him a sacrifice of more than the four hundred thousandth part of his conversable life.

I would establish but one great general rule to be observed in all conversation, which is this, 'that men should not talk to please themselves, but those that hear them.' This would make them consider, whether what they speak be worth hearing; whether there be either wit or sense in what they are about to say; and, whether it be adapted to the time when, the place where, and the person to whom, it is spoken.

For the utter extirpation of these orators and story-tellers, which I look upon as very great pests of society, I have invented a watch which divides the minute into twelve parts, after the same manner that the ordinary watches are divided into hours: and will

endeavour to get a patent, which shall oblige every club or company to provide themselves with one of these watches, that shall lie upon the table, as an hour-glass is often placed near the pulpit, to measure out the length of a discourse.

I shall be willing to allow a man one round of my watch, that is, a whole minute, to speak in ; but if he exceeds that time, it shall be lawful for any of the company to look upon the watch, or to call him down to order.

Provided, however, that if any one can make it appear he is turned of threescore, he may take two, or, if he pleases, three rounds of the watch without giving offence. Provided, also, that this rule be not construed to extend to the fair sex, who shall still be at liberty to talk by the ordinary watch that is now in use. I would likewise earnestly recommend this little automaton, which may be easily carried in the pocket without any incumbrance, to all such as are troubled with this infirmity of speech, that upon pulling out their watches, they may have frequent occasion to consider what they are doing, and by that means cut the thread of the story short, and hurry to a conclusion. I shall only add, that this watch, with a paper of directions how to use it, is sold at Charles Lillie's.

I am afraid a *Tatler* will be thought a very improper paper to censure this humour of being talkative; but I would have my readers know that there is a great difference between *tattle* and *loquacity*, as I shall show at large in a following lucubration ; it being my design to throw away a candle upon that subject, in order to explain the whole art of tattling in all its branches and subdivisions. [*Tatler*, No. 264.

Inquisitive Men and Loud Talkers

THERE is a creature who has all the organs of speech, a tolerable good capacity for conceiving what is said to it, together with a pretty proper behaviour in all the occurrences of common life; but naturally very vacant of thought in itself, and therefore forced to apply itself to foreign assistances. Of this make is that man who is very inquisitive. You may often observe, that though he speaks as good sense as any man upon anything with which he is well acquainted, he cannot trust to the range of his own fancy to entertain himself upon that foundation, but goes on to still new inquiries. Thus, though you know he is fit for the most polite conversation, you shall see him very well contented to sit by a jockey, giving an account of the many revolutions in his horse's health, what potion he made him take, how that agreed with him, how afterwards he came to his stomach and his exercise, or any the like impertinence; and be as well pleased as if you talked to him on the most important truths. This humour is far from making a man unhappy, though it may subject him to raillery; for he generally falls in with a person who seems to be born for him, which is your talkative fellow. It is so ordered, that there is a secret bent, as natural as the meeting of different sexes, in these two characters, to supply each other's

wants. I had the honour the other day to sit in a public room, and saw an inquisitive man look with an air of satisfaction upon the approach of one of these talkers. The man of ready utterance sat down by him; and rubbing his head, leaning on his arm, and making an uneasy countenance, he began: 'There is no manner of news to-day. I cannot tell what is the matter with me, but I slept very ill last night; whether I caught cold or no, I know not, but I fancy I do not wear shoes thick enough for the weather, and I have coughed all this week: it must be so, for the custom of washing my head winter and summer with cold water, prevents any injury from the season entering that way; so it must come in at my feet; but I take no notice of it: as it comes so it goes. Most of our evils proceed from too much tenderness; and our faces are naturally as little able to resist the cold as other parts. The Indian answered very well to an European, who asked him how he could go naked: "I am all face."'

I observed this discourse was as welcome to my general inquirer as any other of more consequence could have been; but somebody calling our talker to another part of the room, the inquirer told the next man who sat by him, that Mr. such a one, who was just gone from him, used to wash his head in cold water every morning; and so repeated almost *verbatim* all that had been said to him. The truth is, the inquisitive are the funnels of conversation; they do not take in anything for their own use, but merely to pass it to another: they are the channels through which all the good and evil that is spoken in town are conveyed. Such as are offended at them, or think

they suffer by their behaviour, may themselves mend that inconvenience; for they are not a malicious people, and if you will supply them, you may contradict anything they have said before by their own mouths. A farther account of a thing is one of the gratefullest goods that can arrive to them; and it is seldom that they are more particular than to say, 'The town will have it,' or 'I have it from a good hand': so that there is room for the town to know the matter more particularly, and for a better hand to contradict what was said by a good one.

I have not known this humour more ridiculous than in a father, who has been earnestly solicitous to have an account how his son has passed his leisure hours; if it be in a way thoroughly insignificant, there cannot be a greater joy than an inquirer discovers in seeing him follow so hopefully his own steps. But this humour among men is most pleasant when they are saying something which is not wholly proper for a third person to hear, and yet is in itself indifferent. The other day there came in a well-dressed young fellow, and two gentlemen of this species immediately fell a-whispering his pedigree. I could overhear, by breaks, 'She was his aunt'; then an answer, 'Ay, she was of the mother's side.' Then again in a little lower voice, 'His father wore generally a darker wig'; answer, 'Not much. But this gentleman wears higher heels to his shoes.'

As the inquisitive, in my opinion, are such merely from a vacancy in their own imaginations, there is nothing, methinks, so dangerous as to communicate secrets to them; for the same temper of inquiry makes them as impertinently communicative; but no man,

though he converses with them, need put himself in their power, for they will be contented with matters of less moment as well. When there is fuel enough, no matter what it is——thus the ends of sentences in the newspapers, as, 'This wants confirmation,' 'This occasions many speculations,' and 'Time will discover the event,' are read by them, and considered not as mere expletives.

One may see now and then this humour accompanied with an insatiable desire of knowing what passes, without turning it to any use in the world but merely their own entertainment. A mind which is gratified this way is adapted to humour and pleasantry, and formed for an unconcerned character in the world; and, like myself, to be a mere spectator. This curiosity, without malice or self-interest, lays up in the imagination a magazine of circumstances which cannot but entertain when they are produced in conversation. If one were to know, from the man of the first quality to the meanest servant, the different intrigues, sentiments, pleasures, and interests of mankind, would it not be the most pleasing entertainment imaginable to enjoy so constant a farce, as the observing mankind much more different from themselves in their secret thoughts and public actions, than in their nightcaps and long periwigs?

'MR. SPECTATOR,

'Plutarch tells us, that Caius Gracchus, the Roman, was frequently hurried in his passion into so loud and tumultuous a way of speaking, and so strained his voice, as not to be able to proceed. To remedy this excess, he had an ingenious servant, by name

Licinius, always attending him with a pitch-pipe, or instrument to regulate the voice; who, whenever he heard his master begin to be high, immediately touched a soft note; at which, 'tis said, Caius would presently abate and grow calm.

'Upon recollecting this story, I have frequently wondered that this useful instrument should have been so long discontinued; especially since we find that this good office of Licinius has preserved his memory for many hundred years, which, methinks, should have encouraged some one to have revived it, if not for the public good, yet for his own credit. It may be objected, that our loud talkers are so fond of their own noise, that they would not take it well to be checked by their servants: but granting this to be true, surely any of their hearers have a very good title to play a soft note in their own defence. To be short, no Licinius appearing, and the noise increasing, I was resolved to give this late long vacation to the good of my country; and I have at length, by the assistance of an ingenious artist (who works to the Royal Society) almost completed my design, and shall be ready in a short time to furnish the public with what number of these instruments they please, either to lodge at coffee-houses, or carry for their own private use. In the meantime I shall pay that respect to several gentlemen, who I know will be in danger of offending against this instrument, to give them notice of it by private letters, in which I shall only write, "Get a Licinius."

'I should now trouble you no longer, but that I must not conclude without desiring you to accept one of these pipes, which shall be left for you with Buckley;

and which I hope will be serviceable to you, since as you are silent yourself you are most open to the insults of the noisy. I am, sir, etc.,

'W. B.'

'I had almost forgot to inform you, that as an improvement in this instrument, there will be a particular note, which I call a hush-note; and this is to be made use of against a long story, swearing, obscenness, and the like.'

[*Spectator*, No. 228.

A Visit to Don Saltero's

HAVING taken upon me to cure all the distempers which proceed from affections of the mind, I have laboured, since I first kept this public stage, to do all the good I could, and have perfected many cures at my own lodgings; carefully avoiding the common method of mountebanks, to do their most eminent operations in the sight of the people; but must be so just to my patients as to declare, they have testified under their hands, their sense of my poor abilities, and the good I have done them, which I publish for the benefit of the world, and not out of any thoughts of private advantage.

I have cured fine Mrs. Spy of a great imperfection in her eyes, which made her eternally rolling them from one coxcomb to another in public places, in so languishing a manner, that it at once lessened her own power, and her beholders' vanity. Twenty drops of my ink, placed in certain letters on which she attentively looked for half an hour, have restored her to the true use of her sight; which is, to guide and not mislead us. Ever since she took the liquor, which I call 'Bickerstaff's circumspection-water,' she looks right forward, and can bear being looked at for half a day without returning one glance. This water has a peculiar virtue in it, which makes it the only true

cosmetic or beauty-wash in the world: the nature of it is such, that if you go to a glass with a design to admire your face, it immediately changes it into downright deformity. If you consult it only to look with a better countenance upon your friends, it immediately gives an alacrity to the visage, and new grace to the whole person. There is, indeed, a great deal owing to the constitution of the person to whom it is applied: it is in vain to give it when the patient is in the rage of the distemper; a bride in her first month, a lady soon after her husband's being knighted, or any person of either sex, who has lately obtained any new good fortune or preferment, must be prepared some time before they use it. It has an effect upon others, as well as the patient, when it is taken in due form. Lady Petulant has by the use of it cured her husband of jealousy, and Lady Gad her whole neighbourhood of detraction.

The fame of these things, added to my being an old fellow, makes me extremely acceptable to the fair sex. You would hardly believe me, when I tell you there is not a man in town so much their delight as myself. They make no more of visiting me, than going to Madam Depingle's; there were two of them, namely, Damia and Clidamira (I assure you women of distinction), who came to see me this morning in their way to prayers; and being in a very diverting humour (as innocence always makes people cheerful), they would needs have me, according to the distinction of Pretty and Very Pretty Fellows, inform them if I thought either of them had a title to the Very Pretty among those of their own sex; and if I did, which was the more deserving of the two?

To put them to the trial, 'Look ye,' said I, 'I must not rashly give my judgment in matters of this importance; pray let me see you dance, I play upon the kit.' They immediately fell back to the lower end of the room (you may be sure they curtsied low enough to me) and began. Never were two in the world so equally matched, and both scholars to my namesake Isaac. Never was man in so dangerous a condition as myself, when they began to expand their charms. 'Oh! ladies, ladies,' cried I, 'not half that air, you will fire the house.' Both smiled; for, by the by, there is no carrying a metaphor too far, when a lady's charms are spoken of. Somebody, I think, has called a fine woman dancing, 'a brandished torch of beauty.' These rivals moved with such an agreeable freedom, that you would believe their gesture was the necessary effect of the music, and not the product of skill and practice. Now Clidamira came on with a crowd of graces, and demanded my judgment with so sweet an air—and she had no sooner carried it, but Damia made her utterly forgot, by a gentle sinking, and a rigadoon step. The contest held a full half-hour; and, I protest, I saw no manner of difference in their perfections, until they came up together, and expected sentence. 'Look ye, ladies,' said I, 'I see no difference in the least in your performance; but you, Clidamira, seem to be so well satisfied that I shall determine for you, that I must give it to Damia, who stands with so much diffidence and fear, after showing an equal merit to what she pretends to. Therefore, Clidamira, you are a pretty; but, Damia, you are a *very* pretty lady: for,' said I, 'beauty loses its force, if not accompanied with modesty. She that has an

humble opinion of herself, will have everybody's applause, because she does not expect it; while the vain creature loses approbation through too great a sense of deserving it.'

Being of a very spare and hective constitution, I am forced to make frequent journeys of a mile or two for fresh air; and indeed by this last, which was no farther than the village of Chelsea, I am further convinced of the necessity of travelling to know the world; for, as it is usual with young voyagers, as soon as they land upon a shore, to begin their accounts of the nature of the people, their soil, their government, their inclinations, and their passions; so really I fancied I could give you an immediate description of this village, from the five fields where the robbers lie in wait, to the coffee-house where the Literati sit in council. A great ancestor of ours by the mother's side, Mr. Justice Overdo (whose history is written by Ben Jonson), met with more enormities by walking incognito than he was capable of correcting; and found great mortifications in observing also persons of eminence, whom he before knew nothing of. Thus it fared with me, even in a place so near the town as this. When I came into the coffee-house, I had not time to salute the company, before my eye was diverted by ten thousand gimcracks round the room, and on the ceiling. When my first astonishment was over, comes to me a sage of a thin and meagre countenance; which aspect made me doubt, whether reading or fretting had made it so philosophic; but I very soon perceived him to be of that sect which the ancients call Gingivistæ; in our language, tooth-drawers. I immediately had a respect for the man; for these practical philosophers

go upon a rational hypothesis, not to cure, but take away the part affected. My love of mankind made me very benevolent to Mr. Salter; for such is the name of this eminent barber and antiquary. Men are usually, but unjustly, distinguished rather by their fortunes than their talents, otherwise this personage would make a great figure in that class of men which I distinguish under the title of Odd Fellows. But it is the misfortune of persons of great genius to have their faculties dissipated by attention to too many things at once. Mr. Salter is an instance of this: if he would wholly give himself up to the string, instead of playing twenty beginnings to tunes, he might, before he dies, play 'Roger de Caubly' quite out. I heard him go through his whole round, and indeed I think he does play the merry 'Christ Church Bells' pretty justly; but he confessed to me, he did that rather to show he was orthodox, than that he valued himself upon the music itself. Or, if he did proceed in his anatomy, why might he not hope in time to cut off legs, as well as draw teeth? The particularity of this man put me into a deep thought, whence it should proceed, that of all the lower order, barbers should go farther in hitting the ridiculous than any other set of men. Watermen brawl, cobblers sing: but why must a barber be for ever a politician, a musician, an anatomist, a poet, and a physician? The learned Vossius says his barber used to comb his head in Iambics. And indeed, in all ages, one of this useful profession, this order of cosmetic philosophers, has been celebrated by the most eminent hands. You see the barber in *Don Quixote* is one of the principal characters in the history; which gave me satisfaction in the doubt, why

Don Saltero writ his name with a Spanish termination: for he is descended in a right line, not from John Tradescant, as he himself asserts, but from that memorable companion of the knight of Mancha. And I hereby certify all the worthy citizens who travel to see his rarities, that his double-barrelled pistols, targets, coats of mail, his Sclopeta and sword of Toledo, were left to his ancestor by the said Don Quixote, and by the said ancestor to all his progeny down to Don Saltero. Though I go thus far in favour of Don Saltero's great merit, I cannot allow a liberty he takes of imposing several names (without my licence) on the collections he has made, to the abuse of the good people of England; one of which is particularly calculated to deceive religious persons, to the great scandal of the well-disposed, and may introduce heterodox opinions. He shows you a straw-hat, which I know to be made by Madge Peskad, within three miles of Bedford; and tells you, 'It is Pontius Pilate's wife's chambermaid's sister's hat.' To my knowledge of this very hat it may be added, that the covering of straw was never used among the Jews, since it was demanded of them to make bricks without it. Therefore this is really nothing but, under the specious pretence of learning and antiquities, to impose upon the world. There are other things which I cannot tolerate among his rarities: as, the china figure of a lady in the glass-case; the Italian engine for the imprisonment of those who go abroad with it: both which I hereby order to be taken down, or else he may expect to have his letters-patent for making punch superseded, be debarred wearing his muff next winter, or ever coming to London without his wife.

It may perhaps be thought, I have dwelt too long upon the affairs of this operator; but I desire the reader to remember, that it is my way to consider men as they stand in merit, and not according to their fortune or figure; and if he is in a coffee-house at the reading hereof, let him look round, and he will find there may be more characters drawn in this account than that of Don Saltero; for half the politicians about him, he may observe, are by their place in nature, of the class of tooth-drawers.

[*Tatler*, No. 34.

On the Lottery

I WENT on Saturday last to make a visit in the city; and as I passed through Cheapside, I saw crowds of people turning down towards the Bank, and struggling who should first get their money into the new-erected lottery. It gave me a great notion of the credit of our present government and administration, to find people press as eagerly to pay money as they would to receive it; and, at the same time, a due respect for that body of men who have found out so pleasing an expedient for carrying on the common cause, that they have turned a tax into a diversion. The cheerfulness of spirit, and the hopes of success, which this project has occasioned in this great city, lightens the burden of the war, and put me in mind of some games, which, they say, were invented by wise men, who were lovers of their country, to make their fellow-citizens undergo the tediousness and fatigues of a long siege. I think there is a kind of homage due to Fortune, if I may call it so; and that I should be wanting to myself, if I did not lay in my pretences to her favour, and pay my compliments to her by recommending a ticket to her disposal. For this reason, upon my return to my lodgings, I sold off a couple of globes and a telescope, which, with the cash I had by me, raised the sum that was requisite for that purpose. I find by my calcula-

tions, that it is but an hundred and fifty thousand to one against my being worth a thousand pounds per annum for thirty-two years; and if any plumb in the city will lay me an hundred and fifty thousand pounds to twenty shillings, which is an even bet, that I am not this fortunate man, I will take the wager, and shall look upon him as a man of singular courage and fair dealing; having given orders to Mr. Morphew to subscribe such a policy in my behalf, if any person accepts of the offer. I must confess, I have had such private intimations from the twinkling of a certain star in some of my astronomical observations, that I should be unwilling to take fifty pounds a year for my chance, unless it were to oblige a particular friend. My chief business at present is to prepare my mind for this change of fortune: for as Seneca, who was a greater moralist, and a much richer man than I shall be with this addition to my present income, says—'*Munera ista Fortunæ putatis? Insidiæ sunt.*' 'What we look upon as gifts and presents of Fortune, are traps and snares which she lays for the unwary.' I am arming myself against her favours with all my philosophy; and that I may not lose myself in such a redundance of unnecessary and superfluous wealth, I have determined to settle an annual pension out of it upon a family of Palatines, and by that means give these unhappy strangers a taste of British property. At the same time, as I have an excellent servant-maid, whose diligence in attending me has increased in proportion to my infirmities, I shall settle upon her the revenue arising out of the ten pounds, and amounting to fourteen shillings per annum; with which she may retire into Wales, where she was born a gentlewoman,

and pass the remaining part of her days in a condition suitable to her birth and quality. It was impossible for me to make an inspection into my own fortune on this occasion, without seeing, at the same time, the fate of others who are embarked in the same adventure. And indeed it was a great pleasure to me to observe, that the war, which generally impoverishes those who furnish out the expense of it, will by this means give estates to some, without making others the poorer for it. I have lately seen several in liveries, who will give as good of their own very suddenly; and took a particular satisfaction in the sight of a young country wench, whom I this morning passed by as she was whirling her mop with her petticoats tucked up very agreeably, who, if there is any truth in my art, is within ten months of being the handsomest great fortune in town. I must confess, I was so struck with the foresight of what she is to be, that I treated her accordingly, and said to her—'Pray, young lady, permit me to pass by.' I would for this reason advise all masters and mistresses to carry it with great moderation and condescension towards their servants until next Michaelmas, lest the superiority at that time should be inverted. I must likewise admonish all my brethren and fellow-adventurers to fill their minds with proper arguments for their support and consolation in case of ill-success. It so happens in this particular, that though the gainers will have no reason to rejoice, the losers will have no reason to complain. I remember, the day after the thousand-pound prize was drawn in the penny lottery, I went to visit a splenetic acquaintance of mine, who was under much dejection, and seemed to me to have suffered some great dis-

appointment. Upon inquiry, I found he had put two-pence for himself and his son into the lottery, and that neither of them had drawn the thousand pounds. Hereupon this unlucky person took occasion to enumerate the misfortunes of his life, and concluded with telling me that he never was successful in any of his undertakings. I was forced to comfort him with the common reflection upon such occasions, that men of the greatest merit are not always men of the greatest success, and that persons of his character must not expect to be as happy as fools. I shall proceed in the like manner with my rivals and competitors for the thousand pounds a year, which we are now in pursuit of; and that I may give general content to the whole body of candidates, I shall allow all that draw prizes to be fortunate, and all that miss them to be wise.

I must not here omit to acknowledge that I have received several letters upon this subject, but find one common error running through them all, which is, that the writers of them believe their fate in these cases depends upon the astrologer, and not upon the stars; as in the following letter from one who, I fear, flatters himself with hopes of success, which are altogether groundless, since he does not seem to me so great a fool as he takes himself to be.

'SIR,

'Coming to town, and finding my friend Mr. Partridge dead and buried, and you the only conjurer in repute, I am under a necessity of applying myself to you for a favour, which, nevertheless, I confess it would better become a friend to ask, than one who is, as I am, altogether a stranger to you; but poverty,

you know, is impudent; and as that gives me the occasion, so that alone could give me the confidence to be thus importunate.

'I am, sir, very poor, and very desirous to be otherwise: I have got ten pounds, which I design to venture in the lottery now on foot. What I desire of you is, that by your art, you will choose such a ticket for me as shall arise a benefit sufficient to maintain me. I must beg leave to inform you, that I am good for nothing, and must therefore insist upon a larger lot than would satisfy those who are capable, by their own abilities, of adding something to what you should assign them; whereas I must expect an absolute independent maintenance, because, as I said, I can do nothing. It is possible, after this free confession of mine, you may think I do not deserve to be rich; but I hope you will likewise observe, I can ill afford to be poor. My own opinion is, that I am well qualified for an estate, and have a good title to luck in a lottery; but I resign myself wholly to your mercy, not without hopes that you will consider the less I deserve, the greater the generosity in you. If you reject me, I have agreed with an acquaintance of mine to bury me for my ten pounds. I once more recommend myself to your favour, and bid you adieu.'

I cannot forbear publishing another letter which I have received, because it redounds to my own credit, as well as to that of a very honest footman:—

'*Jan.* 23, 1710.

'MR. BICKERSTAFF,

'I am bound in justice to acquaint you that I put an advertisement into your last paper about a watch

that was lost, and was brought to me on the very day your paper came out, by a footman; who told me, that he would not have brought it if he had not read your discourse on that day against avarice; but that since he had read it, he scorned to take a reward for doing what in justice he ought to do.

'I am, sir, your most humble servant,

'JOHN HAMMOND.'

[*Tatler*, No. 124.

Cynthio and Amanda

I CAME hither this evening to see fashions; and who should I first encounter but my old friend Cynthio, encompassed by a crowd of young fellows, dictating on the passion of love with the gayest air imaginable! 'Well,' says he, 'as to what I know of the matter, there is nothing but ogling with skill carries a woman; but indeed it is not every fool that is capable of this art; you will find twenty can speak eloquently, fifty that can fight manfully, and a thousand that can dress genteelly at a mistress, where there is one that can gaze skilfully. This requires an exquisite judgment, to take the language of her eyes to yours exactly, and not let yours talk too fast for hers; as at a play between the acts, when beau Frisk stands upon a bench full in Lindamira's face, and her dear eyes are searching round to avoid that flaring open fool; she meets the watchful glance of her true lover, and sees his heart attentive on her charms, and waiting for a second twinkle of her eye for its next motion.' Here the good company sneered; but he goes on. 'Nor is this attendance a slavery, when a man meets with encouragement, and her eye comes often in his way: for, after an evening so spent, and the repetition of four or five significant looks at him, the happy man goes home to his lodging full of ten thousand pleasing images: his brain is dilated, and gives him all the ideas and prospects which it ever lets into its seat of

pleasure. Thus a kind look from Lindamira revives in his imagination all the beauteous lawns, green fields, woods, forests, rivers, and solitudes, which he had ever before seen in picture, description, or real life: and all with this addition, that he now sees them with the eyes of a happy lover, as before only with those of a common man. You laugh, gentlemen; but consider yourselves, ye common people that were never in love, and compare yourselves in good-humour with yourselves out of humour, and ye will then acknowledge that all external objects affect you according to the dispositions ye are in to receive their impressions, and not as those objects are in their own nature. How much more shall all that passes within his view and observation touch with delight a man who is prepossessed with successful love, which is an assemblage of soft affection, gay desires, and hopeful resolutions!'

Poor Cynthio went on at this rate to the crowd about him, without any purpose in his talk, but to vent an heart overflowing with sense of success. I wondered what could exalt him from the distress, in which he had long appeared, to so much alacrity; but my familiar has given me the state of his affairs. It seems, then, that lately coming out of the playhouse, his mistress, who knows he is in her livery, as the manner of insolent beauties is, is resolved to keep him still so, and gave him so much wages as to complain to him of the crowd she was to pass through. He had his wits and resolution enough about him to take her hand, and say he would attend her to the coach. All the way thither my good young man stammered at every word, and stumbled at every step. His mistress,

wonderfully pleased with her triumph, put to him a thousand questions, to make a man of his natural wit speak with hesitation; and let drop her fan, to see him recover it awkwardly. This is the whole foundation of Cynthio's recovery to the sprightly air he appears with at present.

I grew mighty curious to know something more of that lady's affairs, as being amazed how she could dally with an offer of one of his merit and fortune. I sent Pacolet to her lodgings, who immediately brought me back the following letter to her friend and confidant Amanda in the country, wherein she has opened her heart and all its folds.

'DEAR AMANDA,

'The town grows so empty, that you must expect my letter so too, except you will allow me to talk of myself instead of others. You cannot imagine what pain it is, after a whole day spent in public, to want your company, and the ease which friendship allows in being vain to each other, and speaking all our minds. An account of the slaughter which these unhappy eyes have made within ten days last past, would make me appear too great a tyrant to be allowed in a Christian country. I shall therefore confine myself to my principal conquests, which are the hearts of beau Frisk and Jack Freeland, besides Cynthio, who, you know, wore my fetters before you went out of town. Shall I tell you my weakness? I begin to love Frisk: it is the best-humoured impertinent thing in the world: he is always too in waiting, and will certainly carry me off one time or other. Freeland's father and mine have been upon treaty without con-

sulting me; and Cynthio has been eternally watching my eyes, without approaching me, my friends, my maid, or any one about me: he hopes to get me, I believe, as they say the rattlesnake does the squirrel, by staring at me until I drop into his mouth. Freeland demands me for a jointure, which he thinks deserves me; Cynthio thinks nothing high enough to be my value: Freeland therefore will take it for no obligation to have me; and Cynthio's idea of me is what will vanish by knowing me better. Familiarity will equally turn the veneration of the one, and the indifference of the other, into contempt. I will stick therefore to my old maxim, to have that sort of man, who can have no greater views than what are in my power to give him possession of. The utmost of my dear Frisk's ambition is to be thought a man of fashion; and therefore has been so much in mode, as to resolve upon me, because the whole town likes me. Thus I choose rather a man who loves me because others do, than one who approves me on his own judgment. He that judges for himself in love will often change his opinion; but he that follows the sense of others must be constant, as long as a woman can make advances. The visits I make, the entertainments I give, and the addresses I receive, will be all arguments for me with a man of Frisk's second-hand genius; but would be so many bars to my happiness with any other man. However, since Frisk can wait, I shall enjoy a summer or two longer, and remain a single woman, in the sublime pleasure of being followed and admired; which nothing can equal, except that of being beloved by you. I am, etc.'

[*Tatler*, No. 22.

Amateur Coachmen

'To the SPECTATOR-GENERAL of Great Britain

'From the farther end of the Widow's Coffee-house in Devereux Court, Monday evening, twenty-eight minutes and a-half past six.

'DEAR DUMB,

'In short, to use no further preface, if I should tell you that I have seen a hackney-coachman, when he has come to set down his fare, which has consisted of two or three very fine ladies, hand them out, and salute every one of them with an air of familiarity, without giving the least offence, you would perhaps think me guilty of a gasconade. But to clear myself from that imputation, and to explain this matter to you, I assure you that there are many illustrious youths within this city, who frequently recreate themselves by driving of a hackney-coach: but those whom, above all others, I would recommend to you, are the young gentlemen belonging to our Inns of Court. We have, I think, about a dozen coachmen, who have chambers here in the Temple; and as it is reasonable to believe others will follow their example, we may perhaps in time (if it shall be thought convenient) be drove to Westminster by our own fraternity, allowing every fifth person to apply his meditations in

this way, which is but a modest computation, as the humour is now likely to take. It is to be hoped likewise, that there are in the other nurseries of the law to be found a proportionable number of these hopeful plants, springing up to the everlasting renown of their native country. Of how long standing this humour has been, I know not; the first time I had any particular reason to take notice of it, was about this time twelvemonth, when being upon Hampstead Heath with some of these studious young men, who went thither purely for the sake of contemplation, nothing would serve them but I must go through a course of this philosophy too; and being ever willing to embellish myself with any commendable qualification, it was not long ere they persuaded me into the coach-box; nor indeed much longer, before I underwent the fate of my brother Phaeton, for having drove about fifty paces with pretty good success, through my own natural sagacity, together with the good instructions of my tutors, who, to give them their due, were on all hands encouraging and assisting me in this laudable undertaking; I say, sir, having drove about fifty paces with pretty good success, I must needs be exercising the lash, which the horses resented so ill from my hands, that they gave a sudden start, and thereby pitched me directly upon my head, as I very well remembered about half an hour afterwards, which not only deprived me of all the knowledge I had gained for fifty yards before, but had like to have broken my neck into the bargain. After such a severe reprimand, you may imagine I was not very easily prevailed with to make a second attempt; and indeed, upon mature deliberation, the whole science seemed, at least to me, to be

surrounded with so many difficulties, that notwithstanding the unknown advantages which might have accrued to me thereby, I gave over all hopes of attaining it; and I believe had never thought of it more, but that my memory has been lately refreshed by seeing some of these ingenious gentlemen ply in the open streets, one of which I saw receive so suitable a reward to his labours, that though I know you are no friend to story-telling, yet I must beg leave to trouble you with this at large.

'About a fortnight since, as I was diverting myself with a pennyworth of walnuts at the Temple Gate, a lively young fellow in a fustian jacket shot by me, beckoned a coach, and told the coachman he wanted to go as far as Chelsea. They agreed upon the price, and this young gentleman mounts the coach-box; the fellow staring at him, desired to know if he should not drive till they were out of town. "No, no," replied he. He was then going to climb up to him, but received another check, and was then ordered to get into the coach, or behind it, for that he wanted no instructors; "but be sure, you dog you," says he, "don't you bilk me." The fellow thereupon surrendered his whip, scratched his head, and crept into the coach. Having myself occasion to go into the Strand about the same time, we started both together, but the street being very full of coaches, and he not so able a coachman as perhaps he imagined himself, I had soon got a little way before him; often, however, having the curiosity to cast my eye back upon him, to observe how he behaved himself in this high station; which he did with great composure till he came to the "pass," which is a military term the brothers of the whip have given the strait at

St. Clement's Church: when he was arrived near this place, where are always coaches in waiting, the coachmen began to suck up the muscles of their cheeks, and to tip the wink upon each other, as if they had some roguery in their heads, which I was immediately convinced of; for he no sooner came within reach, but the first of them with his whip took the exact dimension of his shoulders, which he very ingeniously called endorsing; and indeed I must say, that every one of them took due care to endorse him as he came through their hands. He seemed at first a little uneasy under the operation, and was going in all haste to take the numbers of their coaches; but at length by the mediation of the worthy gentleman in the coach, his wrath was assuaged, and he prevailed upon to pursue his journey; though, indeed, I thought they had clapped such a spoke in his wheel, as had disabled him from being a coachman for that day at least; for I am only mistaken, Mr. Spec., if some of these endorsements were not wrote in so strong a hand, that they are still legible. Upon my inquiring the reason of this unusual salutation, they told me that it was a custom among them, whenever they saw a brother tottering or unstable in his post, to lend him a hand in order to settle him again therein. For my part I thought their allegations but reasonable, and so marched off. Besides our coachmen, we abound in divers other sorts of ingenious robust youth, who, I hope, will not take it ill if I refer giving you an account of their several recreations to another opportunity. In the meantime if you would but bestow a little of your wholesome advice upon our coachmen, it might perhaps be a reprieve to some of their necks. As I understand you

have several inspectors under you, if you would but send one amongst us here in the Temple, I am persuaded he would not want employment. But I leave this to your own consideration, and am,

'Sir, your very humble servant,

'MOSES GREENBAG.

'*P.S.*—I have heard our critics in the coffee-houses hereabout talk mightily of the unity of time and place. According to my notion of the matter, I have endeavoured at something like it in the beginning of my epistle. I desire to be informed a little as to that particular. In my next I design to give you some account of excellent watermen, who are bred to the law, and far outdo the land-students above mentioned.'

[*Spectator*, No. 498.

HUMOURS OF FASHION

Fashionable Hours

AN old friend of mine being lately come to town, I went to see him on Tuesday last about eight o'clock in the evening, with a design to sit with him an hour or two, and talk over old stories; but, upon inquiry after him, I found he was gone to bed. The next morning, as soon as I was up and dressed, and had despatched a little business, I came again to my friend's house about eleven o'clock, with a design to renew my visit; but, upon asking for him, his servant told me he was just sat down to dinner. In short, I found that my old-fashioned friend religiously adhered to the example of his forefathers, and observed the same hours that had been kept in the family ever since the Conquest.

It is very plain, that the night was much longer formerly in this island than it is at present. By the night, I mean that portion of time which nature has thrown into darkness, and which the wisdom of mankind had formerly dedicated to rest and silence. This used to begin at eight o'clock in the evening, and conclude at six in the morning. The curfew, or eight o'clock bell, was the signal throughout the nation for putting out their candles and going to bed.

Our grandmothers, though they were wont to sit up the last in the family, were all of them fast asleep

at the same hours that their daughters are busy at crimp and basset. Modern statesmen are concerting schemes, and engaged in the depth of politics, at the time when their forefathers were laid down quietly to rest, and had nothing in their heads but dreams. As we have thus thrown business and pleasure into the hours of rest, and by that means made the natural night but half as long as it should be, we are forced to piece it out with a great part of the morning; so that near two-thirds of the nation lie fast asleep for several hours in broad daylight. This irregularity is grown so very fashionable at present, that there is scarce a lady of quality in Great Britain that ever saw the sun rise. And, if the humour increases in proportion to what it has done of late years, it is not impossible but our children may hear the bellman going about the streets at nine o'clock in the morning, and the watch making their rounds until eleven. This unaccountable disposition in mankind to continue awake in the night, and sleep in the sunshine, has made me inquire, whether the same change of inclination has happened to any other animals? For this reason, I desired a friend of mine in the country to let me know, whether the lark rises as early as he did formerly; and whether the cock begins to crow at his usual hour. My friend answered me, 'that his poultry are as regular as ever, and that all the birds and beasts of his neighbourhood keep the same hours that they have observed in the memory of man; and the same which, in all probability, they have kept for these five thousand years.'

If you would see the innovations that have been made among us in this particular, you may only look

into the hours of colleges, where they still dine at eleven, and sup at six, which were doubtless the hours of the whole nation at the time when those places were founded. But at present, the courts of justice are scarce opened in Westminster Hall at the time when William Rufus used to go to dinner in it. All business is driven forward. The landmarks of our fathers, if I may so call them, are removed, and planted farther up into the day; insomuch, that I am afraid our clergy will be obliged, if they expect full congregations, not to look any more upon ten o'clock in the morning as a canonical hour. In my own memory, the dinner has crept by degrees from twelve o'clock to three, and where it will fix nobody knows.

I have sometimes thought to draw up a memorial in the behalf of Supper against Dinner, setting forth, that the said Dinner has made several encroachments upon the said Supper, and entered very far upon his frontiers; that he has banished him out of several families, and in all has driven him from his head-quarters, and forced him to make his retreat into the hours of midnight; and, in short, that he is now in danger of being entirely confounded and lost in a breakfast. Those who have read Lucian, and seen the complaints of the letter *T* against *S*, upon account of many injuries and usurpations of the same nature, will not, I believe, think such a memorial forced and unnatural. If dinner has been thus postponed, or, if you please, kept back from time to time, you may be sure that it has been in compliance with the other business of the day, and that supper has still observed a proportionable distance. There is a venerable

proverb, which we have all of us heard in our infancy, of 'putting the children to-bed, and laying the goose to the fire.' This was one of the jocular sayings of our forefathers, but may be properly used in the literal sense at present. Who would not wonder at this perverted relish of those who are reckoned the most polite part of mankind, that prefer sea-coals and candles to the sun, and exchange so many cheerful morning hours, for the pleasures of midnight revels and debauches? If a man was only to consult his health, he would choose to live his whole time, if possible, in daylight; and to retire out of the world into silence and sleep, while the raw damps and unwholesome vapours fly abroad, without a sun to disperse, moderate, or control them. For my own part, I value an hour in the morning as much as common libertines do an hour at midnight. When I find myself awakened into being, and perceive my life renewed within me, and at the same time see the whole face of nature recovered out of the dark, uncomfortable state in which it lay for several hours, my heart overflows with such secret sentiments of joy and gratitude, as are a kind of implicit praise to the great Author of Nature. The mind, in these early seasons of the day, is so refreshed in all its faculties, and borne up with such new supplies of animal spirits, that she finds herself in a state of youth, especially when she is entertained with the breath of flowers, the melody of birds, the dews that hang upon the plants, and all those other sweets of nature that are peculiar to the morning.

It is impossible for a man to have this relish of being, this exquisite taste of life, who does not come

into the world before it is in all its noise and hurry; who loses the rising of the sun, the still hours of the day, and, immediately upon his first getting up, plunges himself into the ordinary cares or follies of the world.

[*Tatler*, No. 263.

Fashionable Affectations

As bad as the world is, I find by very strict observation upon virtue and vice, that if men appeared no worse than they really are, I should have less work than at present I am obliged to undertake for their reformation. They have generally taken up a kind of inverted ambition, and affect even faults and imperfections of which they are innocent. The other day in a coffee-house I stood by a young heir, with a fresh, sanguine, and healthy look, who entertained us with an account of his diet-drink; though, to my knowledge, he is as sound as any of his tenants.

This worthy youth put me into reflections upon that subject; and I observed the fantastical humour to be so general, that there is hardly a man who is not more or less tainted with it. The first of this order of men are the valetudinarians, who are never in health; but complain of want of stomach or rest every day until noon, and then devour all which comes before them. Lady Dainty is convinced, that it is necessary for a gentlewoman to be out of order; and, to preserve that character, she dines every day in her closet at twelve, that she may become her table at two, and be unable to eat in public. About five years ago, I remember, it was the fashion to be short-sighted. A man would not own an acquaintance until he had first examined him with his glass. At a lady's

entrance into the playhouse, you might see tubes immediately levelled at her from every quarter of the pit and side-boxes. However, that mode of infirmity is out, and the age has recovered its sight: but the blind seemed to be succeeded by the lame, and a jaunty limp is the present beauty. I think I have formerly observed, a cane is part of the dress of a prig, and always worn upon a button, for fear he should be thought to have an occasion for it, or be esteemed really, and not genteelly, a cripple. I have considered, but could never find out the bottom of this vanity. I indeed have heard of a Gascon general, who, by the lucky grazing of a bullet on the roll of his stocking, took occasion to halt all his life after. But as for our peaceable cripples, I know no foundation for their behaviour, without it may be supposed that, in this warlike age, some think a cane the next honour to a wooden leg. This sort of affectation I have known run from one limb or member to another. Before the limpers came in, I remember a race of lispers, fine persons, who took an aversion to particular letters in our language. Some never uttered the letter H; and others had as mortal an aversion to S. Others have had their fashionable defect in their ears, and would make you repeat all you said twice over. I know an ancient friend of mine, whose table is every day surrounded with flatterers, that makes use of this, sometimes as a piece of grandeur, and at others as an art, to make them repeat their commendations. Such affectations have been indeed in the world in ancient times; but they fell into them out of politic ends. Alexander the Great had a wry neck, which made it the fashion in his court to carry their heads on one side when they

came into the presence. One who thought to outshine the whole court, carried his head so over complaisantly, that this martial prince gave him so great a box on the ear, as set all the heads of the court upright.

This humour takes place in our minds as well as bodies. I know at this time a young gentleman, who talks atheistically all day in coffee-houses, and in his degrees of understanding sets up for a free-thinker; though it can be proved upon him, he says his prayers every morning and evening. But this class of modern wits I shall reserve for a chapter by itself.

Of the like turn are all your marriage-haters, who rail at the noose, at the words, 'for ever and aye,' and at the same time are secretly pining for some young thing or other that makes their hearts ache by her refusal. The next to these are such as pretend to govern their wives, and boast how ill they use them, when, at the same time, go to their houses and you shall see them step as if they feared making a noise, and are as fond as an alderman. I do not know but sometimes these pretences may arise from a desire to conceal a contrary defect than that they set up for. I remember, when I was a young fellow, we had a companion of a very fearful complexion, who, when we sat in to drink, would desire us to take his sword from him when he grew fuddled, for it was his misfortune to be quarrelsome.

There are many, many of these evils, which demand my observation; but because I have of late been thought somewhat too satirical, I shall give them warning, and declare to the whole world, that they are not true, but false hypocrites; and make it out that they are good men in their hearts. The motive of

this monstrous affectation, in the above-mentioned and the like particulars, I take to proceed from that noble thirst of fame and reputation which is planted in the hearts of all men. As this produces elegant writings and gallant actions in men of great abilities, it also brings forth spurious productions in men who are not capable of distinguishing themselves by things which are really praiseworthy. As the desire of fame in men of true wit and gallantry shows itself in proper instances, the same desire in men who have the ambition without proper faculties, runs wild and discovers itself in a thousand extravagances, by which they would signalise themselves from others, and gain a set of admirers. When I was a middle-aged man, there were many societies of ambitious young men in England, who, in their pursuits after fame, were every night employed in roasting porters, smoking cobblers, knocking down watchmen, overturning constables, breaking windows, blackening signposts, and the like immortal enterprises, that dispersed their reputation throughout the whole kingdom. One could hardly find a knocker at a door in a whole street after a midnight expedition of these *beaux esprits*. I was lately very much surprised by an account of my maid, who entered my bed-chamber this morning in a very great fright, and told me, she was afraid my parlour was haunted; for that she had found several panes of my windows broken, and the floor strewed with halfpence. I have not yet a full light into this new way, but am apt to think, that it is a generous piece of wit that some of my contemporaries make use of, to break windows, and leave money to pay for them.

[*Tatler*, No. 77.

On Ladies' Dress

WHEN artists would expose their diamonds to an advantage, they usually set them to show in little cases of black velvet. By this means the jewels appear in their true and genuine lustre, while there is no colour that can infect their brightness, or give a false cast to the water. When I was at the opera the other night, the assembly of ladies in mourning made me consider them in the same kind of view. A dress wherein there is so little variety shows the face in all its natural charms, and makes one differ from another only as it is more or less beautiful. Painters are ever careful of offending against a rule which is so essential in all just representations. The chief figure must have the strongest point of light, and not be injured by any gay colourings that may draw away the attention to any less considerable part of the picture. The present fashion obliges everybody to be dressed with propriety, and makes the ladies' faces the principal objects of sight. Every beautiful person shines out in all the excellence with which nature has adorned her; gaudy ribbons and glaring colours being now out of use, the sex has no opportunity given them to disfigure themselves; which they seldom fail to do whenever it lies in their power. When a woman comes to her glass, she does not employ her time in making herself look

more advantageously what she really is; but endeavours to be as much another creature as she possibly can. Whether this happens because they stay so long, and attend their work so diligently, that they forget the faces and persons which they first sat down with, or whatever it is, they seldom rise from the toilet the same women they appeared when they began to dress. What jewel can the charming Cleora place in her ears that can please her beholders so much as her eyes? The cluster of diamonds upon the breast can add no beauty to the fair chest of ivory which supports it. It may indeed tempt a man to steal a woman, but never to love her. Let Thalestris change herself into a motley party-coloured animal: the pearl necklace, the flowered stomacher, the artificial nosegay, and shaded furbelow, may be of use to attract the eye of the beholder, and turn it from the imperfections of her features and shape. But if ladies will take my word for it (and as they dress to please men, they ought to consult our fancy rather than their own in this particular), I can assure them, there is nothing touches our imagination so much as a beautiful woman in a plain dress. There might be more agreeable ornaments found in our own manufacture, than any that rise out of the looms of Persia.

This, I know, is a very harsh doctrine to womankind, who are carried away with everything that is showy, and with what delights the eye, more than any other species of living creatures whatsoever. Were the minds of the sex laid open, we should find the chief idea in one to be a tippet, in another a muff, in a third a fan, and in a fourth a farthingale. The memory of an old visiting lady is so filled with gloves,

silks, and ribbons, that I can look upon it as nothing else but a toy-shop. A matron of my acquaintance, complaining of her daughter's vanity, was observing, that she had all of a sudden held up her head higher than ordinary, and taken an air that showed a secret satisfaction in herself, mixed with a scorn of others. 'I did not know,' says my friend, 'what to make of the carriage of this fantastical girl, until I was informed by her eldest sister, that she had a pair of striped garters on.' This odd turn of mind often makes the sex unhappy, and disposes them to be struck with everything that makes a show, however trifling and superficial.

Many a lady has fetched a sigh at the toss of a wig, and been ruined by the tapping of a snuff-box. It is impossible to describe all the execution that was done by the shoulder-knot while that fashion prevailed, or to reckon up all the maidens that have fallen a sacrifice to a pair of fringed gloves. A sincere heart has not made half so many conquests as an open waistcoat; and I should be glad to see an able head make so good a figure in a woman's company as a pair of red heels. A Grecian hero, when he was asked whether he could play upon the lute, thought he had made a very good reply, when he answered, 'No; but I can make a great city of a little one.' Notwithstanding his boasted wisdom, I appeal to the heart of any toast in town, whether she would not think the lutenist preferable to the statesman? I do not speak this out of any aversion that I have to the sex; on the contrary, I have always had a tenderness for them; but, I must confess, it troubles me very much to see the generality of them place their affections on improper

objects, and give up all the pleasures of life for gewgaws and trifles.

Mrs. Margery Bickerstaff, my great-aunt, had a thousand pounds to her portion, which our family was desirous of keeping among themselves, and therefore used all possible means to turn off her thoughts from marriage. The method they took was, in any time of danger, to throw a new gown or petticoat in her way. When she was about twenty-five years of age, she fell in love with a man of an agreeable temper and equal fortune, and would certainly have married him, had not my grandfather, Sir Jacob, dressed her up in a suit of flowered satin; upon which she set so immoderate a value upon herself, that the lover was contemned and discarded. In the fortieth year of her age she was again smitten; but very luckily transferred her passion to a tippet, which was presented to her by another relation who was in the plot. This, with a white sarsenet hood, kept her safe in the family until fifty. About sixty, which generally produces a kind of latter spring in amorous constitutions, my aunt Margery had again a colt's tooth in her head; and would certainly have eloped from the mansion-house, had not her brother Simon, who was a wise man and a scholar, advised to dress her in cherry-coloured ribbons, which was the only expedient that could have been found out by the wit of man to preserve the thousand pounds in our family, part of which I enjoy at this time.

This discourse puts me in mind of a humourist mentioned by Horace, called Eutrapelus, who, when he designed to do a man a mischief, made him a present of a gay suit; and brings to my memory

another passage of the same author, when he describes the most ornamental dress that a woman can appear in, with two words, *simplex munditiis* which I have quoted for the benefit of my female readers.

[*Tatler*, No. 151.

Decorum in Dress

ACCORDING to my late resolution, I take the holidays to be no improper season to entertain the town with the addresses of my correspondents. In my walks every day, there appear all round me very great offenders in the point of dress. An *armed* tailor had the impudence yesterday in the Park to smile in my face, and pull off a laced hat to me, as it were in contempt of my authority and censure. However, it is a very great satisfaction that other people, as well as myself, are offended with these improprieties. The following notices, from persons of different sexes and qualities, are a sufficient instance how useful my lucubrations are to the public.

'JACK'S COFFEE-HOUSE, NEAR GUILDHALL,
December 27.

'COUSIN BICKERSTAFF,

'It has been the peculiar blessing of our family to be always above the smiles or frowns of fortune, and, by a certain greatness of mind, to restrain all irregular fondnesses or passions. From hence it is, that though a long decay, and a numerous descent, have obliged many of our house to fall into the arts of trade and business, no one person of us has ever made an appearance that betrayed our being unsatisfied with

our own station of life, or has ever affected a mien or gesture unsuitable to it.

'You have up and down in your writings very justly remarked, that it is not this or the other profession or quality among men that gives us honour or esteem, but the well or ill behaving ourselves in those characters. It is, therefore, with no small concern, that I behold in coffee-houses and public places my brethren, the tradesmen of this city, put off the smooth, even, and ancient decorum of thriving citizens, for a fantastical dress and figure, improper for their persons and characters, to the utter destruction of that order and distinction, which of right ought to be between St. James's and Milk Street, the Camp and Cheapside.

'I have given myself some time to find out how distinguishing the frays in a lot of muslins, or drawing up a regiment of thread laces, or making a panegyric on pieces of sagathy or Scotch plaid, should entitle a man to a laced hat or sword, a wig tied up with ribbons, or an embroidered coat. The college say, this enormity proceeds from a sort of delirium in the brain, which makes it break out first about the head, and, for want of timely remedies, fall upon the left thigh, and from thence, in little mazes and windings, run over the whole body, as appears by pretty ornaments on the buttons, button-holes, garterings, sides of the breeches, and the like. I beg the favour of you to give us a discourse wholly upon the subject of habits, which will contribute to the better government of conversation among us, and in particular oblige, sir,

'Your affectionate cousin,

'FELIX TRANQUILLUS.'

'To ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, Esquire, Censor of Great Britain.

'The humble petition of Ralph Nab, haberdasher of hats, and many other poor sufferers of the same trade,

'Sheweth,

'That for some years last past the use of gold and silver galloon upon hats has been almost universal; being undistinguishably worn by soldiers, esquires, lords, footmen, beaux, sportsmen, traders, clerks, prigs, smarts, cullies, pretty fellows, and sharpers.

'That the said use and custom has been two ways very prejudicial to your petitioners. First, in that it has induced men, to the great damage of your petitioners, to wear their hats upon their heads; by which means the said hats last much longer whole, than they would do if worn under their arms. Secondly, in that very often a new dressing and a new lace supply the place of a new hat, which grievance we are chiefly sensible of in the spring-time, when the company is leaving the town; it so happening commonly, that a hat shall frequent, all winter, the finest and best assemblies without any ornament at all, and in May shall be tricked up with gold or silver, to keep company with rustics, and ride in the rain. All which premises your petitioners humbly pray you to take into your consideration, and either to appoint a day in your Court of Honour, when all pretenders to the galloon may enter their claims, and have them approved or rejected, or to give us such other relief as to your great wisdom shall seem meet.

'And your petitioners, etc.'

Order my friend near Temple Bar, the author of the hunting-cock, to assist the court when this petition is read, of which Mr. Lillie to give him notice.

'To ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, Esquire, Censor of Great Britain.

'The humble petition of Elizabeth Slender, spinster,

'Sheweth,

'That on the twentieth of this instant December, her friend, Rebecca Hive, and your petitioner, walking in the Strand, saw a gentleman before us in a gown, whose periwig was so long, and so much powdered, that your petitioner took notice of it, and said, "she wondered that lawyer would so spoil a new gown with powder." To which it was answered, "that he was no lawyer but a clergyman." Upon a wager of a pot of coffee we overtook him, and your petitioner was soon convinced she had lost.

'Your petitioner, therefore, desires your worship to cite the clergyman before you, and to settle and adjust the length of canonical periwigs, and the quantity of powder to be made use of in them, and to give such other directions as you shall think fit.

'And your petitioner, etc.'

Query: Whether this gentleman be not chaplain to a regiment, and, in such case, allow powder accordingly?

After all that can be thought on these subjects, I must confess, that the men who dress with a certain ambition to appear more than they are, are much more

excusable than those who betray, in the adorning their persons, a secret vanity and inclination to shine in things, wherein, if they did succeed, it would rather lessen than advance their character. For this reason I am more provoked at the allegations relating to the clergyman, than any other hinted at in these complaints. I have indeed a long time, with much concern, observed abundance of *pretty fellows* in sacred orders, and shall in due time let them know, that I pretend to give ecclesiastical as well as civil censures. A man well bred and well dressed in that habit, adds to the sacredness of his function an agreeableness not to be met with among the laity. I own I have spent some evenings among the men of wit of that profession with an inexpressible delight. Their habitual care of their character gives such a chastisement to their fancy, that all which they utter in company is as much above what you meet with in other conversation, as the charms of a modest, are superior to those of a light, woman. I therefore earnestly desire our young missionaries from the universities to consider where they are, and not dress, and look, and move like young officers. It is no disadvantage to have a very handsome white hand; but, were I to preach repentance to a gallery of ladies, I would, methinks, keep my gloves on. I have an unfeigned affection to the class of mankind appointed to serve at the altar, therefore am in danger of running out of my way, and growing too serious on this occasion; for which reason I shall end with the following epistle, which, by my interest in Tom Trot, the penny post, I procured a copy of:—

'To the Rev. Mr. RALPH INCENSE, Chaplain to the Countess Dowager of Brumpton.

'Sir,

'I heard and saw you preach last Sunday. I am an ignorant young woman, and understood not half you said: but ah! your manner, when you held up both your hands towards our pew! Did you design to win me to Heaven or yourself?

'Your humble servant,

'PENITENCE GENTLE.'

[*Tatler*, No. 270.

The Irony of Fashion

THE most improper things we commit in the conduct of our lives, we are led into by the force of fashion. Instances might be given, in which a prevailing custom makes us act against the rules of nature, law, and common sense: but at present I shall confine my consideration of the effect it has upon men's minds, by looking into our behaviour when it is the fashion to go into mourning. The custom of representing the grief we have for the loss of the dead by our habits, certainly had its rise from the real sorrow of such as were too much distressed to take the proper care they ought of their dress. By degrees it prevailed, that such as had this inward oppression upon their minds, made an apology for not joining with the rest of the world in their ordinary diversions, by a dress suited to their condition. This therefore was at first assumed by such only as were under real distress: to whom it was a relief that they had nothing about them so light and gay as to be irksome to the gloom and melancholy of their inward reflections, or that might misrepresent them to others. In process of time this laudable distinction of the sorrowful was lost, and mourning is now worn by heirs and widows. You see nothing but magnificence and solemnity in the equipage of the relict, and an air of release from

servitude in the pomp of a son who has lost a wealthy father. This fashion of sorrow is now become a generous part of the ceremonial between princes and sovereigns, who in the language of all nations are styled brothers to each other, and put on the purple upon the death of any potentate with whom they live in amity. Courtiers, and all who wish themselves such, are immediately seized with grief from head to foot upon this disaster to their prince; so that one may know by the very buckles of a gentleman-usher, what degree of friendship any deceased monarch maintained with the court to which he belongs. A good courtier's habit and behaviour is hieroglyphical on these occasions: he deals much in whispers, and you may see he dresses according to the best intelligence.

The general affectation among men, of appearing greater than they are, makes the whole world run into the habit of the court. You see the lady, who the day before was as various as a rainbow, upon the time appointed for beginning to mourn, as dark as a cloud. This humour does not prevail only on those whose fortunes can support any change in their equipage, not on those only whose incomes demand the wantonness of new appearances; but on such also who have just enough to clothe them. An old acquaintance of mine, of ninety pounds a year, who has naturally the vanity of being a man of fashion deep at his heart, is very much put to it to bear the mortality of princes. He made a new black suit upon the death of the King of Spain, he turned it for the King of Portugal, and he now keeps his chamber while it is scouring for the Emperor. He is a good economist in his extravagance, and makes only a

fresh black button upon his iron-grey suit for any potentate of small territories; he indeed adds his crape hatband for a prince whose exploits he has admired in the *Gazette*. But whatever compliments may be made on these occasions, the true mourners are the mercers, silkmen, lacemen and milliners. A prince of merciful and royal disposition would reflect with great anxiety upon the prospect of his death, if he considered what numbers would be reduced to misery by that accident only: he would think it of moment enough to direct, that in the notification of his departure, the honour done to him might be restrained to those of the household of the prince to whom it should be signified. He would think a general mourning to be in a less degree the same ceremony which is practised in barbarous nations, of killing their slaves to attend the obsequies of their kings.

I had been wonderfully at a loss for many months together, to guess at the character of a man who came now and then to our coffee-house: he ever ended a newspaper with this reflection, 'Well, I see all the foreign princes are in good health.' If you asked, 'Pray, sir, what says the *Postman* from Vienna?' he answered, 'Make us thankful, the German princes are all well': 'What does he say from Barcelona?' 'He does not speak but that the country agrees very well with the new Queen.' After very much inquiry, I found this man of universal loyalty was a wholesale dealer in silks and ribbons: his way is, it seems, if he hires a weaver, or workman, to have it inserted in his articles, 'That all this shall be well and truly performed, provided no foreign potentate shall depart this life within the time above-mentioned.' It happens in all public

mournings, that the many trades which depend upon our habits, are during that folly either pinched with present want, or terrified with the apparent approach of it. All the atonement which men can make for wanton expenses (which is a sort of insulting the scarcity under which others labour) is, that the superfluities of the wealthy give supplies to the necessities of the poor: but instead of any other good arising from the affectation of being in courtly habits of mourning, all order seems to be destroyed by it; and the true honour which one court does to another on that occasion, loses its force and efficacy. When a foreign minister beholds the court of a nation (which flourishes in riches and plenty) lay aside, upon the loss of his master, all marks of splendour and magnificence, though the head of such a joyful people, he will conceive greater idea of the honour done his master, than when he sees the generality of the people in the same habit. When one is afraid to ask the wife of a tradesman whom she has lost of her family; and after some preparation endeavours to know whom she mourns for; how ridiculous is it to hear her explain herself, that we have lost one of the House of Austria! Princes are elevated so highly above the rest of mankind, that it is a presumptuous distinction to take a part in honours done to their memories, except we have authority for it, by being related in a particular manner to the court which pays that veneration to their friendship, and seems to express on such an occasion the sense of the uncertainty of human life in general, by assuming the habit of sorrow though in the full possession of triumph and royalty.

[*Spectator*, No. 64.

A Fashionable Visitor

THERE has not some years been such a tumult in our neighbourhood as this evening about six. At the lower end of the lane the word was given, that there was a great funeral coming by. The next moment came forward, and in a very hasty, instead of a solemn manner, a long train of lights, when at last a footman, in very high youth and health, with all his force, ran through the whole art of beating the door of the house next to me, and ended his rattle with the true finishing rap. This did not only bring one to the door at which he knocked, but to that of every one in the lane in an instant. Among the rest, my country maid took the alarm, and immediately running to me, told me, 'there was a fine, fine lady, who had three men with burial torches making way before her, carried by two men upon poles, with looking-glasses on each side of her, and one glass also before, she herself appearing the prettiest that ever was.' The girl was going on in her story, when the lady was come to my door in her chair, having mistaken the house. As soon as she entered I saw she was Mr. Isaac's scholar, by her speaking air, and the becoming stop she made when she began her apology. 'You will be surprised, sir,' said she, 'that I take this liberty, who am utterly a stranger to you; besides that it may be thought an

indecorum that I visit a man.' She made here a pretty hesitation, and held her fan to her face; then, as if recovering her resolution, she proceeded—'But I think you have said, that men of your age are of no sex; therefore, I may be as free with you as one of my own.' The lady did me the honour to consult me on some particular matters, which I am not at liberty to report. But, before she took her leave, she produced a long list of names, which she looked upon, to know whither she was to go next. I must confess, I could hardly forbear discovering to her, immediately, that I secretly laughed at the fantastical regularity she observed in throwing away her time; but I seemed to indulge her in it, out of a curiosity to hear her own sense of her way of life. 'Mr. Bickerstaff,' said she, 'you cannot imagine how much you are obliged to me, in staying thus long with you, having so many visits to make; and, indeed, if I had not hopes that a third part of those I am going to will be abroad, I should be unable to despatch them this evening.' 'Madam,' said I, 'are you in all this haste and perplexity, and only going to such as you have not a mind to see?' 'Yes, sir,' said she, 'I have several now with whom I keep a constant correspondence, and return visit for visit punctually every week, and yet we have not seen each other since last November was twelvemonth.'

She went on with a very good air, and fixing her eyes on her list, told me, 'she was obliged to ride about three miles and a-half before she arrived at her own house.' I asked 'after what manner this list was taken, whether the persons writ their names to her, and desired that favour, or how she knew she was not cheated in her muster-roll?' 'The method we take,'

says she, 'is, that the porter or servant who comes to the door, writes down all the names who come to see us, and all such are entitled to a return of their visit.' 'But,' said I, 'madam, I presume those who are searching for each other, and know one another by messages, may be understood as candidates only for each other's favour; and that, after so many how-dees, you proceed to visit or not, as you like the run of each other's reputation or fortune.' 'You understand it aright,' said she; 'and we become friends, as soon as we are convinced that our dislike to each other may be of any consequence: for, to tell you truly,' said she, 'for it is in vain to hide anything from a man of your penetration, general visits are not made out of good-will, but for fear of ill-will. Punctuality in this case is often a suspicious circumstance; and there is nothing so common as to have a lady say, "I hope she has heard nothing of what I said of her, that she grows so great with me!" But, indeed, my porter is so dull and negligent, that I fear he has not put down half the people I owe visits to.' 'Madam,' said I, 'methinks it would be very proper if your gentleman-usher or groom of the chamber were always to keep an account, by way of debtor and creditor. I know a city lady who uses that method, which I think very laudable; for though you may possibly, at the court end of the town, receive at the door, and light up better than within Temple Bar, yet I must do that justice to my friends, the ladies within the walls, to own, that they are much more exact in their correspondence. The lady I was going to mention as an example has always the second apprentice out of the counting-house for her own use on her visiting-day, and he sets down

very methodically all the visits which are made her. I remember very well, that on the first of January last, when she made up her account for the year 1708, it stood thus :

Mrs. Courtwood—Debtor.		*Per Contra*—Creditor.	
To seventeen hundred and four visits received . .	1704	By eleven hundred and nine paid .	1109
		Due to balance .	595
	1704		1704

'This gentlewoman is a woman of great economy, and was not afraid to go to the bottom of her affairs; and, therefore, ordered her apprentice to give her credit for my Lady Easy's impertinent visits upon wrong days, and deduct only twelve per cent. He had orders also to subtract one and a-half from the whole of such as she had denied herself to before she kept a day; and after taking those proper articles of credit on her side, she was in arrear but five hundred. She ordered her husband to buy in a couple of fresh coach-horses; and with no other loss than the death of two footmen, and a churchyard cough brought upon her coachman, she was clear in the world on the tenth of February last, and keeps so beforehand, that she pays everybody their own, and yet makes daily new acquaintances.'

I know not whether this agreeable visitant was fired with the example of the lady I told her of, but she immediately vanished out of my sight, it being, it seems, as necessary a point of good-breeding, to go off as if you stole something out of the house, as it is to enter as if you came to fire it. I do not know one thing that contributes so much to the lessening the

esteem men of sense have to the fair sex, as this article of visits. A young lady cannot be married, but all impertinents in town must be beating the tattoo from one quarter of the town to the other, to show they know what passes. If a man of honour should once in an age marry a woman of merit for her intrinsic value, the envious things are all in motion in an instant to make it known to the sisterhood as an indiscretion, and publish to the town how many pounds he might have had to have been troubled with one of them. After they are tired with that, the next thing is, to make their compliments to the married couple and their relations. They are equally busy at a funeral, and the death of a person of quality is always attended with the murder of several sets of coach-horses and chairmen. In both cases, the visitants are wholly unaffected, either with joy or sorrow; for which reason, their congratulations and condolences are equally words of course; and one would be thought wonderfully ill-bred, that should build upon such expressions as encouragements to expect from them any instance of friendship.

Thus are the true causes of living, and the solid pleasures in life, lost in show, imposture, and impertinence. As for my part, I think most of the misfortunes in families arise from the trifling way the women have in spending their time, and gratifying only their eyes and ears, instead of their reason and understanding.

A fine young woman, bred under a visiting mother, knows all that is possible for her to be acquainted with by report, and sees the virtuous and the vicious used so indifferently, that the fears she is born with are

abated, and desires indulged, in proportion to her love of that light and trifling conversation. I know I talk like an old man; but I must go on to say, that I think the general reception of mixed company, and the pretty fellows that are admitted at those assemblies, give a young woman so false an idea of life, that she is generally bred up with a scorn of that sort of merit in a man, which only can make her happy in marriage; and the wretch, to whose lot she falls, very often receives in his arms a coquette, with the refuse of a heart long before given away to a coxcomb. . . .

[*Tatler*, No. 109.

A Fashionable Inventory

THE lady hereafter-mentioned, having come to me in very great haste, and paid me much above the usual fee, as a cunning-man, to find her stolen goods, and also having approved my late discourse of advertisements, obliged me to draw up this, and insert it in the body of my paper.

ADVERTISEMENT

Whereas Bridget Howd'ee, late servant to the Lady Fardingale, a short, thick, lively, hard-favoured wench of about twenty-nine years of age, her eyes small and bleared, and nose very broad at bottom, and turning up at the end, her mouth wide, and lips of an unusual thickness, two teeth out before, the rest black and uneven, the tip of her left ear being of a mouse colour, her voice loud and shrill, quick of speech, and something of a Welsh accent, withdrew herself on Wednesday last from her ladyship's dwelling-house, and, with the help of her consorts, carried off the following goods of her said lady: viz. a thick wadded calico wrapper, a musk-coloured velvet mantle lined with squirrel-skins, eight night-shifts, four pair of silk stockings curiously darned, six pair of laced shoes, new and old, with the heels of half two inches higher than their fellows; a quilted petticoat of the largest size, and one of canvas with whale-bone hoops; three pair of stays,

bolstered below the left shoulder, two pair of hips of the newest fashion, six round-about aprons with pockets, and four striped muslin night-rails very little frayed; a silver pot for coffee or chocolate, the lid much bruised; a broad-brimmed flat silver plate for sugar with Rhenish wine; a silver ladle for plumb-porridge; a silver cheese-toaster with three tongues, an ebony handle, and silvering at the end; a silver posnet to butter eggs; one caudle and two cordial-water cups, two cocoa-cups, and an ostrich's egg, with rims and feet of silver, a marrow-spoon with a scoop at the other end, a silver orange-strainer, eight sweet-meat spoons made with forks at the end, an agate-handle knife and fork in a sheath, a silver tongue-scraper, a silver tobacco-box, with a tulip graved on the top; and a bible bound in shagreen, with gilt leaves and clasps, never opened but once. Also a small cabinet, with six drawers inlaid with red tortoise-shell, and brass gilt ornaments at the four corners, in which were two leather forehead-cloths, three pair of oiled dog-skin gloves, seven cakes of superfine Spanish wool, half a dozen of Portugal dishes, and a quire of paper from thence; two pair of bran-new plumpers, four black-lead combs, three pair of fashionable eye-brows, two sets of ivory teeth, little the worse for wearing, and one pair of box for common use; Adam and Eve in bugle work, without fig leaves, upon canvas, curiously wrought with her ladyship's own hand; several filigrane curiosities; a crotchet of one hundred and twenty-two diamonds, set strong and deep in silver, with a rump-jewel after the same fashion; bracelets of braided hair, pomander and seed-pearl; a large old purple velvet purse embroidered, and

shutting with a spring, containing two pictures in miniature, the features visible; a broad thick gold ring with a hand-in-hand engraved upon it, and within this poesy, 'While life does last, I'll hold thee fast'; another set round with small rubies and sparks, six wanting; another of Turkey stone, cracked through the middle; an Elizabeth and four Jacobuses, one guinea, the first of the coin, an angel with a hole bored through, a broken half of a Spanish piece of gold, a crown-piece with the breeches, an old nine-pence bent both ways by Lilly the almanack-maker, for luck at langteraloo, and twelve of the shells called blackmoor's teeth; one small amber box with apoplectic balsam, and one silver gilt of a larger size for cachou and carraway comfits, to be taken at long sermons, the lid enamelled, representing a cupid fishing for hearts, with a piece of gold on his hook; over his head this rhyme, 'Only with gold, you me shall hold.' In the lower drawer was a large new gold repeating watch made by a Frenchman; a gold chain, and all the proper appurtenances hung upon steel swivels, to wit, lockets with the hair of dead and living lovers, seals with arms, emblems, and devices cut in cornelian, agate, and onyx, with cupids, hearts, darts, altars, flames, rocks, pickaxes, roses, thorns, and sunflowers; as also variety of ingenious French mottos; together with gold etuys for quills, scissors, needles, thimbles, and a sponge dipped in Hungary water, left but the night before by a young lady going upon a frolic incog. There was also a bundle of letters, dated between the years one thousand six hundred and seventy, and one thousand six hundred and eighty-two, most of them signed Philander, the rest Strephon, Amyntas, Cory-

don, and Adonis; together with a collection of receipts to make pastes for the hands, pomatums, lip-salves, white-pots, beautifying creams, water of talc, frog-spawn water, and decoctions for clearing the complexion.

Whoever can discover the aforesaid goods, so that they may be had again, shall have fifty guineas for the whole, or proportionably for any part.

N.B.—Her ladyship is pleased to promise ten pounds for the packet of letters over and above, or five for Philander's only, being her first love. 'My lady bestows those of Strephon to the finder, being so written, that they may serve to any woman who reads them.'

P.S.—As I am a patron of persons who have no other friend to apply to, I cannot suppress the following complaint:

'SIR,

'I am a blackmoor boy, and have, by my lady's order, been christened by the chaplain. The good man has gone further with me, and told me a great deal of good news; as, that I am as good as my lady herself, as I am a Christian, and many other things: but for all this, the parrot, who came over with me from our country, is as much esteemed by her as I am. Besides this, the shock-dog has a collar that cost almost as much as mine. I desire also to know, whether now I am a Christian, I am obliged to dress like a Turk, and wear a turban.

'I am, sir, your most humble servant,

'POMPEY.'

[*Tatler*, No. 245.

THEATRICAL ESSAYS

The Pleasures of the Playhouse

THE town grows so very empty, that the greater number of my gay characters are fled out of my sight into the country. My beaux are now shepherds, and my belles wood-nymphs. They are lolling over rivulets, and covered with shades, while we who remain in town, hurry through the dust about impertinencies without knowing the happiness of leisure and retirement. To add to this calamity, even the actors are going to desert us for a season, and we shall not shortly have so much as a landscape or a forest scene to refresh ourselves with in the midst of our fatigues. This may not, perhaps, be so sensible a loss to any other as to me; for I confess it is one of my greatest delights to sit unobserved and unknown in the gallery, and entertain myself either with what is personated on the stage, or observe what appearances present themselves in the audience. If there were no other good consequences in a playhouse, than that so many persons of different ranks and conditions are placed there in their most pleasing aspects, that prospect only would be very far from being below the pleasures of a wise man. There is not one person you can see, in whom, if you look with an inclination to be pleased, you may not behold something worthy or agreeable.

Our thoughts are in our features; and the visage of those in whom love, rage, anger, jealousy, or envy, have their frequent mansions, carries the traces of those passions wherever the amorous, the choleric, the jealous, or the envious, are pleased to make their appearance. However, the assembly at a play is usually made up of such as have a sense of some elegance in pleasure; by which means the audience is generally composed of those who have gentle affections, or at least of such, as at that time are in the best humour you can ever find them. This has insensibly a good effect upon our spirits; and the musical airs which are played to us, put the whole company into a participation of the same pleasure, and by consequence, for that time, equal in humour, in fortune, and in quality. Thus far we gain only by coming into an audience; but if we find, added to this, the beauties of proper action, the force of eloquence, and the gaiety of well-placed lights and scenes, it is being happy, and seeing others happy, for two hours: a duration of bliss not at all to be slighted by so short-lived a creature as man. Why then should not the duty of the player be had in much more esteem than it is at present? If the merit of a performance is to be valued according to the talents which are necessary to it, the qualifications of a player should raise him much above the arts and ways of life which we call mercenary or mechanic. When we look round a full house, and behold so few that can, though they set themselves out to show as much as the persons on the stage do, come up to what they would appear even in dumb show; how much does the actor deserve our approbation, who adds to the advantage of looks and motions, the tone of voice,

the dignity, the humility, the sorrow, and the triumph, suitable to the character he personates?

It may possibly be imagined by severe men, that I am too frequent in the mention of the theatrical representations; but who is not excessive in the discourse of what he extremely likes? Eugenio can lead you to a gallery of fine pictures, which collection he is always increasing: Crassus, through woods and forests, to which he designs to add the neighbouring counties. These are great and noble instances of their magnificence. The players are my pictures, and their scenes my territories. By communicating the pleasure I take in them, it may in some measure add to men's gratification this way; as viewing the choice and wealth of Eugenio and Crassus augments the enjoyments of those whom they entertain, with a prospect of such possessions as would not otherwise fall within the reach of their fortunes.

It is a very good office one man does another, when he tells him the manner of his being pleased; and I have often thought, that a comment upon the capacities of the players would very much improve the delight that way, and impart it to those who otherwise have no sense of it.

The first of the present stage are Wilks and Cibber, perfect actors in their different kinds. Wilks has a singular talent in representing the graces of nature; Cibber the deformity in the affectation of them. Were I a writer of plays, I should never employ either of them in parts which had not their bent this way. This is seen in the inimitable strain and run of good-humour which is kept up in the character of Wildair, and in the nice and delicate abuse of understanding in that

of Sir Novelty. Cibber, in another light, hits exquisitely the flat civility of an affected gentleman-usher, and Wilks the easy frankness of a gentleman.

If you would observe the force of the same capacities in higher life, can anything be more ingenuous than the behaviour of Prince Harry, when his father checks him? anything more exasperating than that of Richard, when he insults his superiors? To beseech gracefully, to approach respectfully, to pity, to mourn, to love, are the places wherein Wilks may be made to shine with the utmost beauty. To rally pleasantly, to scorn artfully, to flatter, to ridicule, and to neglect, are what Cibber would perform with no less excellence.

When actors are considered with a view to their talents, it is not only the pleasure of that hour of action, which the spectators gain from their performance; but the opposition of right and wrong on the stage, would have its force in the assistance of our judgments on other occasions. I have at present under my tutelage a young poet, who, I design, shall entertain the town the ensuing winter. And as he does me the honour to let me see his comedy as he writes it, I shall endeavour to make the parts fit the geniuses of the several actors, as exactly as their habits can their bodies. And because the two I have mentioned are to perform the principal parts, I have prevailed with the house to let the *Careless Husband* be acted on Tuesday next, that my young author may have a view of the play, which is acted to perfection, both by them and all concerned in it; as being born within the walls of the theatre, and written with an exact knowledge of the abilities of the performers. Mr. Wilks will do his best in this play, because it is for his own benefit; and

Mr. Cibber, because he wrote it. Besides which, all the great beauties we have left in town, or within call of it, will be present, because it is the last play this season. This opportunity will, I hope, inflame my pupil with such generous notions, from seeing so fair an assembly as will be then present, that his play may be composed of sentiments and characters proper to be presented to such an audience. His drama at present has only the outlines drawn. There are, I find, to be in it all the reverend offices of life (such as regard to parents, husbands, and honourable lovers) preserved with the utmost care; and, at the same time, that agreeableness of behaviour, with the intermixture of pleasing passions which arise from innocence and virtue, interspersed in such a manner, as that to be charming and agreeable, shall appear the natural consequence of being virtuous. This great end is one of those I propose to do in my censorship; but if I find a thin house on an occasion when such a work is to be promoted, my pupil shall return to his commons at Oxford, and Shire Lane and the theatres be no longer correspondents.

[*Tatler*, No. 182.

Betterton the Actor

HAVING received notice that the famous actor, Mr. Betterton, was to be interred this evening in the cloisters near Westminster Abbey, I was resolved to walk thither and see the last office done to a man whom I had always very much admired, and from whose action I had received more strong impressions of what is great and noble in human nature, than from the arguments of the most solid philosophers, or the descriptions of the most charming poets I had ever read. As the rude and untaught multitude are no way wrought upon more effectually, than by seeing public punishments and executions; so men of letters and education feel their humanity most forcibly exercised, when they attend the obsequies of men who had arrived at any perfection in liberal accomplishments. Theatrical action is to be esteemed as such, except it be objected that we cannot call that an art which cannot be attained by art. Voice, stature, motion, and other gifts, must be very bountifully bestowed by nature, or labour and industry will but push the unhappy endeavourer in that way the farther off his wishes.

Such an actor as Mr. Betterton ought to be recorded with the same respect as Roscius among the Romans.

The greatest orator has thought fit to quote his judgment, and celebrate his life. Roscius was the example to all that would form themselves into proper and winning behaviour. His action was so well adapted to the sentiments he expressed, that the youth of Rome thought they wanted only to be virtuous, to be as graceful in their appearance as Roscius. The imagination took a lively impression of what was great and good; and they, who never thought of setting up for the art of imitation, became themselves inimitable characters.

There is no human invention so aptly calculated for the forming a freeborn people as that of a theatre. Tully reports, that the celebrated player of whom I am speaking, used frequently to say, 'The perfection of an actor is only to become what he is doing.' Young men, who are too unattentive to receive lectures, are irresistibly taken with performances. Hence it is, that I extremely lament the little relish the gentry of this nation have, at present, for the just and noble representations in some of our tragedies. The operas, which are of late introduced, can leave no trace behind them that can be of service beyond the present moment. To sing and to dance, are accomplishments very few have any thoughts of practising; but to speak justly, and move gracefully, is what every man thinks he does perform, or wishes he did.

I have hardly a notion, that any performer of antiquity could surpass the action of Mr. Betterton in any of the occasions in which he has appeared on our stage. The wonderful agony which he appeared in, when he examined the circumstance of the handkerchief in Othello; the mixture of love that intruded

upon his mind, upon the innocent answers Desdemona makes, betrayed in his gesture such a variety and vicissitude of passions, as would admonish a man to be afraid of his own heart; and perfectly convince him, that it is to stab it, to admit that worst of daggers, jealousy. Whoever reads in his closet this admirable scene, will find that he cannot, except he has as warm an imagination as Shakespeare himself, find any but dry, incoherent, and broken sentences: but a reader that has seen Betterton act it, observes, there could not be a word added; that longer speeches had been unnatural, nay, impossible, in Othello's circumstances. The charming passage in the same tragedy, where he tells the manner of winning the affection of his mistress, was urged with so moving and graceful an energy, that, while I walked in the cloisters, I thought of him with the same concern as if I waited for the remains of a person who had in real life done all that I had seen him represent. The gloom of the place, and faint lights before the ceremony appeared, contributed to the melancholy disposition I was in; and I began to be extremely afflicted, that Brutus and Cassius had any difference; that Hotspur's gallantry was so unfortunate; and that the mirth and good-humour of Falstaff could not exempt him from the grave. Nay, this occasion, in me who look upon the distinctions amongst men to be merely scenical, raised reflections upon the emptiness of all human perfection and greatness in general; and I could not but regret, that the sacred heads which lie buried in the neighbourhood of this little portion of earth, in which my poor old friend is deposited, are returned to dust as well as he, and that there is no difference in the grave between the

imaginary and the real monarch. This made me say of human life itself with Macbeth :—

> To-morrow, to-morrow, and to-morrow,
> Creeps in a stealing pace from day to day
> To the last moment of recorded time!
> And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
> To their eternal night! Out, out, short candle,
> Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
> And then is heard no more.

The mention I have here made of Mr. Betterton, for whom I had, as long as I have known anything, a very great esteem and gratitude for the pleasure he gave me, can do him no good; but it may possibly be of service to the unhappy woman he has left behind him, to have it known, that this great tragedian was never in a scene half so moving, as the circumstances of his affairs created at his departure. His wife, after a cohabitation of forty years in the strictest amity, has long pined away with a sense of his decay, as well in his person as his little fortune; and, in proportion to that, she has herself decayed both in her health and reason. Her husband's death, added to her age and infirmities, would certainly have determined her life, but that the greatness of her distress has been her relief, by a present deprivation of her senses. This absence of reason is her best defence against age, sorrow, poverty, and sickness. I dwell upon this account so distinctly, in obedience to a certain great spirit who hides her name, and has by letter applied to me to recommend to her some object of compassion, from whom she may be concealed.

This, I think, is a proper occasion for exerting such heroic generosity; and as there is an ingenuous shame

in those who have known better fortune, to be reduced to receive obligations, as well as a becoming pain in the truly generous to receive thanks; in this case both those delicacies are preserved; for the person obliged is as incapable of knowing her benefactress, as her benefactress is unwilling to be known by her.

[*Tatler*, No. 167.

The Death of Estcourt

My paper is, in a kind, a letter of news, but it regards rather what passes in the world of conversation than that of business. I am very sorry that I have at present a circumstance before me, which is of very great importance to all who have a relish for gaiety, wit, mirth, or humour; I mean the death of poor Dick Estcourt. I have been obliged to him for so many hours of jollity, that it is but a small recompense, though all I can give him, to pass a moment or two in sadness for the loss of so agreeable a man. Poor Estcourt! the last time I saw him, we were plotting to show the town his great capacity for acting in its full light, by introducing him as dictating to a set of young players, in what manner to speak this sentence, and utter the other passion. He had so exquisite a discerning of what was defective in any object before him, that in an instant he could show you the ridiculous side of what would pass for beautiful and just, even to men of no ill judgment, before he had pointed at the failure. He was no less skilful in the knowledge of beauty; and I dare say, there is no one who knew him well, but can repeat more well-turned compliments, as well as smart repartees of Mr. Estcourt's, than of any other man in England. This was easily to be observed in his inimitable faculty of telling a story, in

which he would throw in natural and unexpected incidents to make his court to one part, and rally the other part of the company. Then he would vary the usage he gave them, according as he saw them bear kind or sharp language. He had the knack to raise up a pensive temper, and mortify an impertinently gay one, with the most agreeable skill imaginable. There are a thousand things which crowd into my memory, which make me too much concerned to tell on about him. Hamlet holding up the skull which the gravedigger threw to him, with an account that it was the head of the king's jester, falls into very pleasing reflections, and cries out to his companion, 'Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy; he hath borne me on his back a thousand times: and now how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? not one now to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come. Make her laugh at that.'

It is an insolence natural to the wealthy, to affix, as much as in them lies, the character of a man to his circumstances. Thus it is ordinary with them to praise faintly the good qualities of those below them, and say, 'It is very extraordinary in such a man as he is,' or the like, when they are forced to acknowledge the value of him whose lowness upbraids their exaltation. It is to this humour only, that it is to be ascribed, that

a quick wit in conversation, a nice judgment upon any emergency that could arise, and a most blameless inoffensive behaviour, could not raise this man above being received only upon the foot of contributing to mirth and diversion. But he was as easy under that condition, as a man of so excellent talents was capable; and since they would have it, that to divert was his business, he did it with all the seeming alacrity imaginable, though it stung him to the heart that it was his business. Men of sense, who could taste his excellences, were well satisfied to let him lead the way in conversation, and play after his own manner; but fools, who provoked him to mimicry, found he had the indignation to let it be at their expense who called for it, and he would show the form of conceited heavy fellows as jests to the company at their own request, in revenge for interrupting him from being a companion to put on the character of a jester.

What was peculiarly excellent in this memorable companion was, that in the accounts he gave of persons and sentiments, he did not only hit the figure of their faces, and manner of their gestures, but he would in his narrations fall into their very way of thinking, and this when he recounted passages wherein men of the best wit were concerned, as well as such wherein were represented men of the lowest rank of understanding. It is certainly as great an instance of self-love to a weakness, to be impatient of being mimicked, as any can be imagined. There were none but the vain, the formal, the proud, or those who were incapable of amending their faults, that dreaded him; to others he was in the highest degree pleasing; and I do not know any satisfaction of any indifferent kind I ever tasted

so much, as having got over an impatience of my seeing myself in the air he could put me when I have displeased him. It is indeed to his exquisite talent this way, more than any philosophy I could read on the subject, that my person is very little of my care, and it is indifferent to me what is said of my shape, my air, my manner, my speech, or my address. It is to poor Estcourt I chiefly owe that I am arrived at the happiness of thinking nothing a diminution to me, but what argues a depravity of my will.

It has as much surprised me as anything in nature, to have it frequently said, that he was not a good player: but that must be owing to a partiality for former actors in the parts in which he succeeded them, and judging by comparison of what was liked before, rather than by the nature of the thing. When a man of his wit and smartness could put on an utter absence of common sense in his face, as he did in the character of Bullfinch in the *Northern Lass*, and an air of insipid cunning and vivacity in the character of Pounce in the *Tender Husband*, it is folly to dispute his capacity and success, as he was an actor.

Poor Estcourt! let the vain and proud be at rest, thou wilt no more disturb their admiration of their dear selves; and thou art no longer to drudge in raising the mirth of stupids, who know nothing of thy merit, for thy maintenance.

It is natural for the generality of mankind to run into reflections upon our mortality, when disturbers of the world are laid at rest, but to take no notice when they who can please and divert are pulled from us. But for my part, I cannot but think the loss of such talents, as the man of whom I am speaking was master

of, a more melancholy instance of mortality than the dissolution of persons of never so high characters in the world, whose pretensions were that they were noisy and mischievous.

But I must grow more succinct, and, as a Spectator, give an account of this extraordinary man, who, in his way, never had an equal in any age before him, or in that wherein he lived. I speak of him as a companion, and a man qualified for conversation. His fortune exposed him to an obsequiousness towards the worst sort of company, but his excellent qualities rendered him capable of making the best figure in the most refined. I have been present with him among men of the most delicate taste a whole night, and have known him (for he saw it was desired) keep the discourse to himself the most part of it, and maintain his good-humour with a countenance, in a language so delightful, without offence to any person or thing upon earth, still preserving the distance his circumstances obliged him to; I say, I have seen him do all this in such a charming manner, that I am sure none of those I hint at will read this without giving him some sorrow for their abundant mirth, and one gush of tears for so many bursts of laughter. I wish it were any honour to the pleasant creature's memory, that my eyes are too much suffused to let me go on——

[*Spectator*, No. 468.

The Opera and the Puppet-show

I WENT on Friday last to the opera, and was surprised to find a thin house at so noble an entertainment, until I heard that the tumbler was not to make his appearance that night. For my own part, I was fully satisfied with the sight of an actor, who, by the grace and propriety of his action and gesture, does honour to a human figure, as much as the other vilifies and degrades it. Every one will easily imagine I mean Signior Nicolini, who sets off the character he bears in an opera by his action, as much as he does the words of it by his voice. Every limb, and every finger, contributes to the part he acts, insomuch that a deaf man might go along with him in the sense of it. There is scarce a beautiful posture in an old statue which he does not plant himself in, as the different circumstances of the story give occasion for it. He performs the most ordinary action in a manner suitable to the greatness of his character, and shows the prince even in the giving of a letter, or despatching of a message. Our best actors are somewhat at a loss to support themselves with proper gesture, as they move from any considerable distance to the front of the stage; but I have seen the person of whom I am now speaking enter alone at the remotest part of it, and advance from it, with such greatness of air and mien, as seemed

to fill the stage, and at the same time commanded the attention of the audience with the majesty of his appearance. But, notwithstanding the dignity and elegance of this entertainment, I find for some nights past, that Punchinello has robbed this gentleman of the greater part of his female spectators. The truth of it is, I find it so very hard a task to keep that sex under any manner of government, that I have often resolved to give them over entirely, and leave them to their own inventions. I was in hopes that I had brought them to some order, and was employing my thoughts on the reformation of their petticoats, when on a sudden I received information from all parts, that they run gadding after a puppet-show. I know very well, that what I here say will be thought by some malicious persons to flow from envy to Mr. Powell; for which reason I shall set the late dispute between us in a true light. Mr. Powell and I had some difference about four months ago, which we managed by way of letter, as learned men ought to do; and I was very well contented to bear such sarcasms as he was pleased to throw upon me, and answered them with the same freedom. In the midst of this our misunderstanding and correspondence, I happened to give the world an account of the order of esquires; upon which Mr. Powell was so disingenuous, as to make one of his puppets, I wish I knew which of them it was, declare, by way of prologue, 'that one Isaac Bickerstaff, a pretended esquire, had written a scurrilous piece, to the dishonour of that rank of men'; and then, with more art than honesty, concluded, 'that all the esquires in the pit were abused by his antagonist as much as he was.' This public accusation made all the esquires

of that county, and several of other parts, my professed enemies. I do not in the least question but that he will proceed in his hostilities; and I am informed, that part of his design in coming to town, was to carry the war into my own quarters. I do, therefore, solemnly declare, notwithstanding that I am a great lover of art and ingenuity, that if I hear he opens any of his people's mouths against me, I shall not fail to write a critique upon his whole performance; for I must confess, that I have naturally so strong a desire of praise, that I cannot bear reproach, though from a piece of timber. As for Punch, who takes all opportunities of bespattering me, I know very well his original, and have been assured by the joiner who put him together, 'that he was in long dispute with himself, whether he should turn him into several pegs and utensils, or make him the man he is.' The same person confessed to me, 'that he had once actually laid aside his head for a nutcracker.' As for his scolding wife, however she may value herself at present, it is very well known, that she is but a piece of crab-tree. This artificer further whispered in my ear, 'that all his courtiers and nobles were taken out of a quick-set hedge not far from Islington; and that Doctor Faustus himself, who is now so great a conjurer, is supposed to have learned his whole art from an old woman in that neighbourhood, whom he long served in the figure of a broomstaff.'

But, perhaps, it may look trivial to insist so much upon men's persons; I shall, therefore, turn my thoughts rather to examine their behaviour, and consider, whether the several parts are written up to that character which Mr. Powell piques himself upon, of

an able and judicious dramatist. I have for this purpose provided myself with the works of above twenty French critics, and shall examine, by the rules which they have laid down upon the art of the stage, whether the unity of time, place, and action, be rightly observed in any one of this celebrated author's productions; as also, whether in the parts of his several actors, and that of Punch in particular, there is not sometimes an impropriety of sentiments, and an impurity of diction.

[*Tatler*, No. 115.

'The Scornful Lady'

I DO not know that I have been in greater delight for these many years, than in beholding the boxes at the play the last time *The Scornful Lady* was acted. So great an assembly of ladies placed in gradual rows in all the ornaments of jewels, silks, and colours, gave so lively and gay an impression to the heart, that methought the season of the year was vanished; and I did not think it an ill expression of a young fellow who stood near me, that called the boxes those 'beds of tulips.' It was a pretty variation of the prospect, when any one of those fine ladies rose up and did honour to herself and friend at a distance, by curtseying; and gave opportunity to that friend to show her charms to the same advantage in returning the salutation. Here that action is as proper and graceful, as it is at church unbecoming and impertinent. By the way, I must take the liberty to observe that I did not see any one who is usually so full of civilities at church, offer at any such indecorum during any part of the action of the play. Such beautiful prospects gladden our minds, and when considered in general, give innocent and pleasing ideas. He that dwells upon any one object of beauty, may fix his imagination

to his disquiet; but the contemplation of a whole assembly together is a defence against the encroachment of desire. At least to me, who have taken pains to look at beauty abstracted from the consideration of its being the object of desire; at power, only as it sits upon another, without any hopes of partaking any share of it; at wisdom and capacity, without any pretensions to rival or envy its acquisitions. I say to me, who am really free from forming any hopes by beholding the persons of beautiful women, or warming myself into ambition from the successes of other men, this world is not only a mere scene, but a very pleasant one. Did mankind but know the freedom which there is in keeping thus aloof from the world, I should have more imitators, than the powerfullest man in the nation has followers. To be no man's rival in love, or competitor in business, is a character which, if it does not recommend you as it ought to benevolence among those whom you live with, yet has it certainly this effect, that you do not stand so much in need of their approbation, as you would if you aimed at it more, in setting your heart on the same things which the generality doat on. By this means, and with this easy philosophy, I am never less at a play than when I am at the theatre; but indeed I am seldom so well pleased with action as in that place; for most men follow nature no longer than while they are in their night-gowns, and all the busy part of the day are in characters which they neither become, nor act in with pleasure to themselves or their beholders. But to return to my ladies: I was very well pleased to see so great a crowd of them assembled at a play, wherein the heroine, as the phrase is, is so just a picture of the

vanity of the sex in tormenting their admirers. The lady who pines for the man whom she treats with so much impertinence and inconstancy, is drawn with much art and humour. Her resolutions to be extremely civil, but her vanity rising just at the instant she resolved to express herself kindly, are described as by one who had studied the sex. But when my admiration is fixed upon this excellent character, and two or three others in the play, I must confess I was moved with the utmost indignation, at the trivial, senseless, and unnatural representation of the chaplain. It is possible there may be a pedant in holy orders, and we have seen one or two of them in the world: but such a driveller as Sir Roger, so bereft of all manner of pride, which is the characteristic of a pedant, is what one would not believe would come into the head of the same man who drew the rest of the play. The meeting between Welford and him shows a wretch without any notion of the dignity of his function; and it is out of all common sense that he should give an account of himself 'as one sent four or five miles in a morning, on foot, for eggs.' It is not to be denied, but this part, and that of the maid whom he makes love to, are excellently well performed; but a thing which is blamable in itself, grows still more so by the success in the execution of it. It is so mean a thing to gratify a loose age with a scandalous representation of what is reputable among men, not to say what is sacred, that no beauty, no excellence in an author ought to atone for it; nay, such excellence is an aggravation of his guilt, and an argument that he errs against the conviction of his own understanding and conscience. Wit should be tried by this rule,

and an audience should rise against such a scene as throws down the reputation of anything, which the consideration of religion or decency should preserve from contempt. But all this evil arises from this one corruption of mind, that makes men resent offences against their virtue, less than those against their understanding. An author shall write as if he thought there was not one man of honour or woman of chastity in the house, and come off with applause: for an insult upon all the ten commandments with the little critics is not so bad as the breach of an unity of time and place. Half-wits do not apprehend the miseries that must necessarily flow from degeneracy of manners; nor do they know that order is the support of society. Sir Roger and his mistress are monsters of the poet's own forming; the sentiments in both of them are such as do not arise in fools of their education. We all know that a silly scholar, instead of being below every one he meets with, is apt to be exalted above the rank of such as are really his superiors: his arrogance is always founded upon particular notions of distinction in his own head, accompanied with a pedantic scorn of all fortune and pre-eminence, when compared with his knowledge and learning. This very one character of Sir Roger, as silly as it really is, has done more towards the disparagement of holy orders, and consequently of virtue itself, than all the wit of that author, or any other, could make up for in the conduct of the longest life after it. I do not pretend, in saying this, to give myself airs of more virtue than my neighbours, but assert it from the principles by which mankind must always be governed. Sallies of imagination are to be overlooked, when they are committed out of

warmth in the recommendation of what is praiseworthy; but a deliberate advancing of vice, with all the wit in the world, is as ill an action as any that comes before the magistrate, and ought to be received as such by the people.

[*Spectator*, No. 270.

'The Distrest Mother'

THE players, who know I am very much their friend, take all opportunities to express a gratitude to me for being so. They could not have a better occasion of obliging me, than one which they lately took hold of. They desired my friend Will Honeycomb to bring me to the reading of a new tragedy; it is called *The Distrest Mother*. I must confess, though some days are past since I enjoyed that entertainment, the passions of the several characters dwell strongly upon my imagination; and I congratulate the age, that they are at last to see truth and human life represented in the incidents which concern heroes and heroines. The style of the play is such as becomes those of the first education, and the sentiments worthy those of the highest figure. It was a most exquisite pleasure to me, to observe real tears drop from the eyes of those who had long made it their profession to dissemble affliction; and the player who read frequently throw down the book, until he had given vent to the humanity which rose in him at some irresistible touches of the imagined sorrow. We have seldom had any female distress on the stage, which did not, upon cool examination, appear to flow from the weakness rather than the misfortune of the person represented: but in this tragedy you are not entertained with the

ungoverned passions of such as are enamoured of each other, merely as they are men and women, but their regards are founded upon high conceptions of each other's virtue and merit; and the character which gives name to the play, is one who has behaved herself with heroic virtue in the most important circumstances of a female life, those of a wife, a widow, and a mother. If there be those whose minds have been too attentive upon the affairs of life, to have any notion of the passion of love in such extremes as are known only to particular tempers, yet in the above-mentioned considerations, the sorrow of the heroine will move even the generality of mankind. Domestic virtues concern all the world, and there is no one living who is not interested that Andromache should be an inimitable character. The generous affection to the memory of her deceased husband, that tender care for her son, which is ever heightened with the consideration of his father, and these regards preserved in spite of being tempted with the possession of the highest greatness, are what cannot but be venerable even to such an audience as at present frequents the English theatre. My friend Will Honeycomb commended several tender things that were said, and told me they were very genteel; but whispered me, that he feared the piece was not busy enough for the present taste. To supply this, he recommended to the players to be very careful in their scenes; and, above all things, that every part should be perfectly new dressed. I was very glad to find that they did not neglect my friend's admonition, because there are a great many in his class of criticism who may be gained by it; but indeed the truth is, that as to the work itself, it is everywhere Nature. The

persons are of the highest quality in life, even that of princes; but their quality is not represented by the poet, with directions that guards and waiters should follow them in every scene, but their grandeur appears in greatness of sentiment, flowing from minds worthy their condition. To make a character truly great, this author understands, that it should have its foundation in superior thoughts and maxims of conduct. It is very certain, that many an honest woman would make no difficulty, though she had been the wife of Hector, for the sake of a kingdom, to marry the enemy of her husband's family and country; and indeed who can deny but she might be still an honest woman, but no heroine? That may be defensible, nay laudable, in one character, which would be in the highest degree exceptionable in another. When Cato Uticensis killed himself, Cottius, a Roman of ordinary quality and character, did the same thing; upon which one said, smiling, 'Cottius might have lived, though Cæsar has seized the Roman liberty.' Cottius's condition might have been the same, let things at the upper end of the world pass as they would. What is further very extraordinary in this work, is, that the persons are all of them laudable, and their misfortunes arise rather from unguarded virtue, than propensity to vice. The town has an opportunity of doing itself justice in supporting the representations of passion, sorrow, indignation, even despair itself, within the rules of decency, honour, and good-breeding; and since there is none can flatter himself his life will be always fortunate, they may here see sorrow, as they would wish to bear it whenever it arrives.

'MR. SPECTATOR,

'I am appointed to act a part in the new tragedy called *The Distrest Mother*. It is the celebrated grief of Orestes which I am to personate; but I shall not act it as I ought, for I shall feel it too intimately to be able to utter it. I was last night repeating a paragraph to myself, which I took to be an expression of rage, and in the middle of the sentence there was a stroke of self-pity which quite unmanned me. Be pleased, sir, to print this letter, that when I am oppressed in this manner at such an interval, a certain part of the audience may not think I am out; and I hope, with this allowance, to do it with satisfaction.

'I am, sir, your most humble servant,

'GEORGE POWELL.'

'MR. SPECTATOR,

'As I was walking the other day in the Park, I saw a gentleman with a very short face; I desire to know whether it was you. Pray inform me as soon as you can, lest I become the most heroic Hecatissa's rival.

'Your humble servant to command,

'SOPHIA.'

'DEAR MADAM,

'It is not me you are in love with, for I was very ill, and kept my chamber all that day.

'Your most humble servant,

'THE SPECTATOR.'

[*Spectator*, No. 290.

VARIOUS ESSAYS

On Duelling

A LETTER from a young lady, written in the most passionate terms, wherein she laments the misfortune of a gentleman, her lover, who was lately wounded in a duel, has turned my thoughts to that subject, and inclined me to examine into the causes which precipitate men into so fatal a folly. And as it has been proposed to treat of subjects of gallantry in the article from hence, and no one point in nature is more proper to be considered by the company who frequent this place than that of duels, it is worth our consideration to examine into this chimerical groundless humour, and to lay every other thought aside, until we have stripped it of all its false pretences to credit and reputation amongst men.

But I must confess, when I consider what I am going about, and run over in my imagination all the endless crowd of men of honour who will be offended at such a discourse; I am undertaking, methinks, a work worthy an invulnerable hero in romance, rather than a private gentleman with a single rapier; but as I am pretty well acquainted by great opportunities with the nature of man, and know of a truth that all men fight against their will, the danger vanishes, and resolution rises upon this subject. For this reason, I shall talk very freely on a custom which all men wish

exploded, though no man has courage enough to resist it.

But there is one unintelligible word, which I fear will extremely perplex my dissertation, and I confess to you I find very hard to explain, which is the term 'satisfaction.' An honest country gentleman had the misfortune to fall into company with two or three modern men of honour, where he happened to be very ill treated; and one of the company, being conscious of his offence, sends a note to him in the morning, and tells him, he was ready to give him *satisfaction.* 'This is fine doing,' says the plain fellow; 'last night he sent me away cursedly out of humour, and this morning he fancies it would be a *satisfaction* to be run through the body!'

As the matter at present stands, it is not to do handsome actions denominates a man of honour; it is enough if he dares to defend ill ones. Thus you often see a common sharper in competition with a gentleman of the first rank; though all mankind is convinced, that a fighting gamester is only a pickpocket with the courage of a highwayman. One cannot with any patience reflect on the unaccountable jumble of persons and things in this town and nation, which occasions very frequently, that a brave man falls by a hand below that of a common hangman, and yet his executioner escapes the clutches of the hangman for doing it. I shall therefore hereafter consider, how the bravest men in other ages and nations have behaved themselves upon such incidents as we decide by combat; and show, from their practice, that this resentment neither has its foundation from true reason or solid fame; but is an imposture, made of cowardice,

falsehood, and want of understanding. For this work, a good history of quarrels would be very edifying to the public, and I apply myself to the town for particulars and circumstances within their knowledge, which may serve to embellish the dissertation with proper cuts. Most of the quarrels I have ever known, have proceeded from some valiant coxcomb's persisting in the wrong, to defend some prevailing folly, and preserve himself from the ingenuousness of owning a mistake.

By this means it is called 'giving a man satisfaction,' to urge your offence against him with your sword. . . . If the contradiction in the very terms of one of our challenges were as well explained and turned into downright English, would it not run after this manner?

'SIR,

'Your extraordinary behaviour last night, and the liberty you were pleased to take with me, makes me this morning give you this, to tell you, because you are an ill-bred puppy, I will meet you in Hyde Park an hour hence; and because you want both breeding and humanity, I desire you would come with a pistol in your hand, on horseback, and endeavour to shoot me through the head, to teach you more manners. If you fail of doing me this pleasure, I shall say you are a rascal, on every post in town: and so, sir, if you will not injure me more, I shall never forgive what you have done already. Pray, sir, do not fail of getting everything ready; and you will infinitely oblige,

'Sir, your most obedient humble servant, etc.'

[*Tatler*, No. 25.

On the Art of Growing Old

IT would be a good appendix to 'The Art of Living and Dying,' if any one would write 'The Art of Growing Old,' and teach men to resign their pretensions to the pleasures and gallantries of youth, in proportion to the alteration they find in themselves by the approach of age and infirmities. The infirmities of this stage of life would be much fewer, if we did not affect those which attend the more vigorous and active part of our days; but instead of studying to be wiser, or being contented with our present follies, the ambition of many of us is also to be the same sort of fools we formerly have been. I have often argued, as I am a professed lover of women, that our sex grows old with a much worse grace than the other does; and have ever been of opinion, that there are more well-pleased old women, than old men. I thought it a good reason for this, that the ambition of the fair sex being confined to advantageous marriages, or shining in the eyes of men, their parts were over sooner, and consequently the errors in the performances of them. The conversation of this evening has not convinced me of the contrary; for one or two fop-women shall not make a balance for the crowds of coxcombs among ourselves, diversified according to the different pursuits of pleasures and business.

Returning home this evening a little before my

usual hour, I scarce had seated myself in my easy-chair, stirred the fire, and stroked my cat, but I heard somebody come rumbling upstairs. I saw my door opened, and a human figure advancing towards me, so fantastically put together, that it was some minutes before I discovered it to be my old and intimate friend, Sam Trusty. Immediately I rose up, and placed him in my own seat; a compliment I pay to few. The first thing he uttered was, 'Isaac, fetch me a cup of your cherry-brandy before you offer to ask any question.' He drank a lusty draught, sat silent for some time, and at last broke out: 'I am come,' quoth he, 'to insult thee for an old fantastic dotard, as thou art, in ever defending the women. I have this evening visited two widows, who are now in that state I have often heard you call an "after-life"; I suppose you mean by it, an existence which grows out of past entertainments, and is an untimely delight in the satisfactions which they once set their hearts upon too much to be ever able to relinquish. Have but patience,' continued he, 'until I give you a succinct account of my ladies, and of this night's adventure. They are much of an age, but very different in their characters. The one of them, with all the advances which years have made upon her, goes on in a certain romantic road of love and friendship which she fell into in her teens; the other has transferred the amorous passions of her first years to the love of cronies, pets, and favourites, with which she is always surrounded; but the genius of each of them will best appear by the account of what happened to me at their houses. About five this afternoon, being tired with study, the weather inviting, and time lying a little upon my hands,

I resolved, at the instigation of my evil genius, to visit them; their husbands having been our contemporaries. This I thought I could do without much trouble; for both live in the very next street. I went first to my lady Camomile; and the butler, who had lived long in the family, and seen me often in his master's time, ushered me very civilly into the parlour, and told me, though my lady had given strict orders to be denied, he was sure I might be admitted, and bid the black boy acquaint his lady that I was come to wait upon her. In the window lay two letters, one broke open, the other fresh sealed with a wafer: the first directed to the divine Cosmelia, the second to the charming Lucinda; but both, by the indented characters, appeared to have been writ by very unsteady hands. Such uncommon addresses increased my curiosity, and put me upon asking my old friend the butler, if he knew who those persons were? "Very well," says he, "that is from Mrs. Furbish to my lady, an old school-fellow and great crony of her ladyship's; and this the answer." I inquired in what county she lived. "Oh dear!" says he, "but just by in the neighbourhood. Why, she was here all this morning, and that letter came and was answered within these two hours. They have taken an odd fancy, you must know, to call one another hard names; but, for all that, they love one another hugely." By this time the boy returned with his lady's humble service to me, desiring I would excuse her; for she could not possibly see me, nor anybody else, for it was opera-night.'

'Methinks,' says I, 'such innocent folly as two old women's courtship to each other, should rather make you merry than put you out of humour.' 'Peace,

good Isaac,' says he, 'no interruption, I beseech you. I got soon to Mrs. Feeble's; she that was formerly Betty Frisk; you must needs remember her; Tom Feeble of Brazen Nose fell in love with her for her fine dancing. Well, Mrs. Ursula, without further ceremony, carries me directly up to her mistress's chamber, where I found her environed by four of the most mischievous animals that can ever infest a family: an old shock dog with one eye, a monkey chained to one side of the chimney, a great grey squirrel to the other, and a parrot waddling in the middle of the room. However, for a while, all was in a profound tranquillity. Upon the mantel-tree, for I am a pretty curious observer, stood a pot of lambetive electuary, with a stick of liquorice, and near it a phial of rose-water, and powder of tutty. Upon the table lay a pipe filled with betony and colt's-foot, a roll of wax-candle, a silver spitting-pot, and a Seville orange. The lady was placed in a large wicker-chair, and her feet wrapped up in flannel, supported by cushions; and in this attitude, would you believe it, Isaac, she was reading a romance with spectacles on. The first compliments over, as she was industriously endeavouring to enter upon conversation, a violent fit of coughing seized her. This awaked Shock, and in a trice the whole room was in an uproar; for the dog barked, the squirrel squealed, the monkey chattered, the parrot screamed, and Ursula, to appease them, was more clamorous than all the rest. You, Isaac, who know how any harsh noise affects my head, may guess what I suffered from the hideous din of these discordant sounds. At length all was appeased, and quiet restored; a chair was drawn for me, where I

was no sooner seated, but the parrot fixed his horny beak, as sharp as a pair of shears, in one of my heels, just above the shoe. I sprung from the place with an unusual agility, and so, being within the monkey's reach, he snatches off my new bob-wig, and throws it upon two apples that were roasting by a sullen sea-coal fire. I was nimble enough to save it from any further damage than singeing the foretop. I put it on; and composing myself as well as I could, I drew my chair towards the other side of the chimney. The good lady, as soon as she had recovered breath, employed it in making a thousand apologies, and, with great eloquence, and a numerous train of words, lamented my misfortune. In the middle of her harangue, I felt something scratching near my knee, and feeling what it should be, found the squirrel had got into my coat pocket. As I endeavoured to remove him from his burrow, he made his teeth meet through the fleshy part of my forefinger. This gave me an inexpressible pain. The Hungary water was immediately brought to bathe it, and goldbeaters' skin applied to stop the blood. The lady renewed her excuses; but being now out of all patience, I abruptly took my leave, and hobbling downstairs with heedless haste, I set my foot full in a pail of water, and down we came to the bottom together.' Here my friend concluded his narrative, and, with a composed countenance, I began to make him compliments of condolence; but he started from his chair, and said, 'Isaac, you may spare your speeches, I expect no reply. When I told you this, I knew you would laugh at me; but the next woman that makes me ridiculous shall be a young one.' [*Tatler*, No. 266.

The Art of Story-telling

TOM LIZARD told us a story the other day, of some persons which our family know very well, with so much humour and life, that it caused a great deal of mirth at the tea-table. His brother Will, the Templar, was highly delighted with it, and the next day being with some of his Inns of Court acquaintance, resolved (whether out of the benevolence, or the pride of his heart, I will not determine) to entertain them with what he called 'a pleasant humour enough.' I was in great pain for him when I heard him begin, and was not at all surprised to find the company very little moved by it. Will blushed, looked round the room, and with a forced laugh, 'Faith, gentlemen,' said he, 'I do not know what makes you look so grave, it was an admirable story when I heard it.'

When I came home I fell into a profound contemplation upon story-telling, and as I have nothing so much at heart as the good of my country, I resolved to lay down some precautions upon this subject.

I have often thought that a story-teller is born, as well as a poet. It is, I think, certain, that some men have such a peculiar cast of mind, that they see things in another light, than men of grave dispositions. Men of a lively imagination, and a mirthful temper, will represent things to their hearers in the same manner

as they themselves were affected with them; and whereas serious spirits might perhaps have been disgusted at the sight of some odd occurrences in life; yet the very same occurrences shall please them in a well-told story, where the disagreeable parts of the images are concealed, and those only which are pleasing exhibited to the fancy. Story-telling is therefore not an art, but what we call a 'knack'; it doth not so much subsist upon wit as upon humour; and I will add, that it is not perfect without proper gesticulations of the body, which naturally attend such merry emotions of the mind. I know very well, that a certain gravity of countenance sets some stories off to advantage, where the hearer is to be surprised in the end; but this is by no means a general rule; for it is frequently convenient to aid and assist by cheerful looks, and whimsical agitations. I will go yet further, and affirm that the success of a story very often depends upon the make of the body, and formation of the features, of him who relates it. I have been of this opinion ever since I criticised upon the chin of Dick Dewlap. I very often had the weakness to repine at the prosperity of his conceits, which made him pass for a wit with the widow at the coffee-house, and the ordinary mechanics that frequent it; nor could I myself forbear laughing at them most heartily, though upon examination I thought most of them very flat and insipid. I found after some time, that the merit of his wit was founded upon the shaking of a fat paunch, and the tossing up of a pair of rosy jowls. Poor Dick had a fit of sickness, which robbed him of his fat and his fame at once; and it was full three months before he regained his reputation, which rose

in proportion to his floridity. He is now very jolly and ingenious, and hath a good constitution for wit.

Those who are thus adorned with the gifts of nature are apt to show their parts with too much ostentation: I would therefore advise all the professors of this art never to tell stories but as they seem to grow out of the subject-matter of the conversation, or as they serve to illustrate, or enliven it. Stories, that are very common, are generally irksome; but may be aptly introduced, provided they be only hinted at, and mentioned by way of allusion. Those, that are altogether new, should never be ushered in, without a short and pertinent character of the chief persons concerned; because, by that means, you make the company acquainted with them; and it is a certain rule, that slight and trivial accounts of those who are familiar to us administer more mirth, than the brightest points of wit in unknown characters. A little circumstance, in the complexion or dress of the man you are talking of, sets his image before the hearer, if it be chosen aptly for the story. Thus, I remember Tom Lizard, after having made his sisters merry with an account of a formal old man's way of complimenting, owned very frankly, that his story would not have been worth one farthing, if he had made the hat of him whom he represented one inch narrower. Besides the marking distinct characters, and selecting pertinent circumstances, it is likewise necessary to leave off in time, and end smartly. So that there is a kind of drama in the forming of a story, and the manner of conducting and pointing it is the same as in an epigram. It is a miserable thing, after one hath raised the expectation of the company by humorous characters, and a pretty

conceit, to pursue the matter too far. There is no retreating, and how poor is it for a story-teller to end his relation by saying, 'That's all'!

As the choosing of pertinent circumstances is the life of a story, and that wherein humour principally consists; so the collectors of impertinent particulars are the very bane and opiates of conversation. Old men are great transgressors this way. Poor Ned Poppy—he's gone—was a very honest man, but was so excessively tedious over his pipe, that he was not to be endured. He knew so exactly what they had for dinner, when such a thing happened; in what ditch his bay stone-horse had his sprain at that time, and how his man John,—no! it was William, started a hare in the common-field; that he never got to the end of his tale. Then he was extremely particular in marriages and inter-marriages, and cousins twice or thrice removed; and whether such a thing happened at the latter end of July, or the beginning of August. He had a marvellous tendency likewise to digressions; insomuch that if a considerable person was mentioned in his story, he would straightway launch out into an episode on him; and again, if in that person's story he had occasion to remember a third man, he broke off, and gave us his history, and so on. He always put me in mind of what Sir William Temple informs us of the tale-tellers in the north of Ireland, who are hired to tell stories of giants and enchanters to lull people asleep. These historians are obliged, by their bargain, to go on without stopping; so that after the patient hath by this benefit enjoyed a long nap, he is sure to find the operator proceeding in his work. Ned procured the like effect in me the last time I was with

him. As he was in the third hour of his story, and very thankful that his memory did not fail him, I fairly nodded in the elbow-chair. He was much affronted at this, till I told him, 'Old friend, you have your infirmity, and I have mine.'

But of all evils in story-telling, the humour of telling tales one after another, in great numbers, is the least supportable. Sir Harry Pandolf and his son gave my Lady Lizard great offence in this particular. Sir Harry hath what they call a string of stories, which he tells over every Christmas. When our family visits there, we are constantly, after supper, entertained with the Glastonbury Thorn. When we have wondered at that a little, 'Ay, but, father,' saith the son, 'let us have the spirit in the wood.' After that hath been laughed at, 'Ay, but, father,' cries the booby again, 'tell us how you served the robber.' 'Alack-a-day,' said Sir Harry, with a smile, and rubbing his forehead, 'I have almost forgot that: but it is a pleasant conceit, to be sure.' Accordingly he tells that and twenty more in the same independent order; and without the least variation, at this day, as he hath done, to my knowledge, ever since the Revolution. I must not forget a very odd compliment that Sir Harry always makes my lady when he dines here. After dinner he strokes his belly, and says with a feigned concern in his countenance, 'Madam, I have lost by you to-day.' 'How so, Sir Harry,' replies my lady. 'Madam,' says he, 'I have lost an excellent stomach.' At this, his son and heir laughs immoderately, and winks upon Mrs. Annabella. This is the thirty-third time that Sir Harry hath been thus arch, and I can bear it no longer.

As the telling of stories is a great help and life to conversation, I always encourage them, if they are pertinent and innocent; in opposition to those gloomy mortals, who disdain everything but matter of fact. Those grave fellows are my aversion, who sift everything with the utmost nicety, and find the malignity of a lie in a piece of humour, pushed a little beyond exact truth. I likewise have a poor opinion of those, who have got a trick of keeping a steady countenance, that cock their hats, and look glum when a pleasant thing is said, and ask, 'Well! and what then?' Men of wit and parts should treat one another with benevolence: and I will lay it down as a maxim, that if you seem to have a good opinion of another man's wit, he will allow you to have judgment.

[*Guardian*, No. 42.

Advice to Ladies on Exercise and Education

It may perhaps appear ridiculous, but I must confess this last summer, as I was riding in Enfield Chase, I met a young lady whom I could hardly get out of my head, and for aught I know, my heart, ever since. She was mounted on a pad, with a very well fancied furniture. She *set* her horse with a very graceful air; and, when I saluted her with my hat, she bowed to me so obligingly that whether it was her civility or beauty that touched me so much, I know not; but I am sure I shall never forget her. She dwells in my imagination in a figure so much to her advantage, that if I were to draw a picture of youth, health, beauty, or modesty, I should represent any or all of them, in the person of that young woman.

I do not find that there are any descriptions in the ancient poets so beautiful as those they draw of nymphs in their pastoral dresses and exercises. Virgil gives Venus the habit of a Spartan huntress when she is to put Æneas in his way, and relieve his cares with the most agreeable object imaginable. Diana and her train are always described as inhabitants of the woods, and followers of the chase. To be well diverted, is the safest guard to innocence; and, methinks, it should be one of the first things to be regarded among

people of condition, to find out proper amusements for young ladies. I cannot but think this of riding might easily be revived among them, when they consider how much it must contribute to their beauty. This would lay up the best portion they could bring into a family, a good stock of health, to transmit to their posterity. Such a charming bloom as this gives the countenance, is very much preferable to the real or affected feebleness or softness, which appear in the faces of our modern beauties.

The comedy called *The Ladies' Cure* represents the affectation of wan looks and languid glances to a very entertaining extravagance. There is, as the lady in the play complains, something so robust in perfect health, that it is with her a point of breeding and delicacy to appear in public with a sickly air. But the natural gaiety and spirit which shine in the complexion of such as form to themselves a sort of diverting industry, by choosing recreations that are exercises, surpass all the false ornaments and graces that can be put on by applying the whole dispensary of a toilet. A healthy body, and a cheerful mind, give charms as irresistible as inimitable. The beauteous Dyctinna, who came to town last week, has, from the constant prospect in a delicious country, and the moderate exercise and journeys in the visits she made round it, contracted a certain life in her countenance, which will in vain employ both the painters and the poets to represent. The becoming negligence in her dress, the severe sweetness of her looks, and a certain innocent boldness in all her behaviour, are the effect of the active recreations I am talking of.

But instead of such, or any other as innocent and

pleasing method of passing away their time with alacrity, we have many in town who spend their hours in an indolent state of body and mind, without either recreations or reflections. I am apt to believe there are some parents imagine their daughters will be accomplished enough, if nothing interrupts their growth, or their shape. According to this method of education, I could name you twenty families, where all the girls hear of, in this life, is, that it is time to rise and come to dinner, as if they were so insignificant as to be wholly provided for when they are fed and clothed.

It is with great indignation that I see such crowds of the female world lost to human society, and condemned to a laziness, which makes life pass away with less relish than in the hardest labour. Palestris, in her drawing-room, is supported by spirits to keep off the returns of spleen and melancholy, before she can get over half of the day for want of something to do, while the wench in the kitchen sings and scours from morning to night.

The next disagreeable thing to a lazy lady, is a very busy one. A man of business in good company, who gives an account of his abilities and despatches, is hardly more insupportable than her they call a notable woman, and a manager. Lady Good-day, where I visited the other day, at a very polite circle, entertained a great lady with a recipe for a poultice, and gave us to understand, that she had done extraordinary cures since she was last in town. It seems a countryman had wounded himself with his scythe as he was mowing, and we were obliged to hear of her charity, her medicine, and her humility, in the harshest tone and coarsest language imaginable.

What I would request in all this prattle is, that our females would either let us have their persons or their minds, in such perfection as nature designed them.

The way to this is, that those who are in the quality of gentlewomen, should propose to themselves some suitable method of passing away their time. This would furnish them with reflections and sentiments proper for the companions of reasonable men, and prevent the unnatural marriages which happen every day between the most accomplished women and the veriest oafs, the worthiest men and the most insignificant females. Were the general turn of women's education of another kind than it is at present, we should want one another for more reasons than we do as the world now goes. The common design of parents, is to get their girls off as well as they can; and they make no conscience of putting into our hands a bargain for our whole life, which will make our hearts ache every day of it. I shall, therefore, take this matter into serious consideration, and will propose, for the better improvement of the fair sex, a Female Library. This collection of books shall consist of such authors as do not corrupt while they divert, but shall tend more immediately to improve them as they are women. They shall be such as shall not hurt a feature by the austerity of their reflections, nor cause one impertinent glance by the wantonness of them. They shall all tend to advance the value of their innocence as virgins, improve their understanding as wives, and regulate their tenderness as parents. It has been very often said in these lucubrations, 'that the ideas which most frequently pass through our imaginations, leave traces of themselves in our countenances.' There

shall be a strict regard had to this in my Female Library, which shall be furnished with nothing that shall give supplies to ostentation or impertinence; but the whole shall be so digested for the use of my students, that they shall not go out of character in their inquiries, but their knowledge appear only a cultivated innocence.

[*Tatler*, No. 248.

On Flogging Schoolboys

I AM very much at a loss to express by any word that occurs to me in our language, that which is understood by *indoles* in Latin. The natural disposition to any particular art, science, profession, or trade, is very much to be consulted in the care of youth, and studied by men for their own conduct when they form to themselves any scheme of life. It is wonderfully hard, indeed, for a man to judge of his own capacity impartially. That may look great to me which may appear little to another; and I may be carried by fondness towards myself so far, as to attempt things too high for my talents and accomplishments. But it is not, methinks, so very difficult a matter to make a judgment of the abilities of others, especially of those who are in their infancy. My commonplace book directs me on this occasion to mention the dawning of greatness in Alexander, who being asked in his youth to contend for a prize in the Olympic games, answered he would, if he had kings to run against him. Cassius, who was one of the conspirators against Cæsar, gave as great a proof of his temper, when in his childhood he struck a playfellow, the son of Sylla, for saying his father was master of the Roman people. Scipio is reported to have answered, when some flatterers at supper were asking him what the Romans should do

for a general after his death, 'Take Marius.' Marius was then a very boy, and had given no instances of his valour; but it was visible to Scipio, from the manners of the youth, that he had a soul formed for the attempt and execution of great undertakings. I must confess I have very often, with much sorrow, bewailed the misfortune of the children of Great Britain, when I consider the ignorance and undiscerning of the generality of schoolmasters. The boasted liberty we talk of, is but a mean reward for the long servitude, the many heartaches and terrors, to which our childhood is exposed in going through a grammar-school. Many of these stupid tyrants exercise their cruelty without any manner of distinction of the capacities of children, or the intention of parents in their behalf. There are many excellent tempers which are worthy to be nourished and cultivated with all possible diligence and care, that were never designed to be acquainted with Aristotle, Tully, or Virgil; and there are as many who have capacities for understanding every word those great persons have writ, and yet were not born to have any relish of their writings. For want of this common and obvious discerning in those who have the care of youth, we have so many hundred unaccountable creatures every age whipped up into great scholars, that are for ever near a right understanding and will never arrive at it. These are the scandal of letters, and these are generally the men who are to teach others. The sense of shame and honour is enough to keep the world itself in order without corporal punishment, much more to train the minds of uncorrupted and innocent children. It happens, I doubt not, more than once in a year, that a lad is

chastised for a blockhead, when it is good apprehension that makes him incapable of knowing what his teacher means. A brisk imagination very often may suggest an error, which a lad could not have fallen into, if he had been as heavy in conjecturing as his master in explaining. But there is no mercy even towards a wrong interpretation of his meaning; the sufferings of the scholar's body are to rectify the mistakes of his mind.

I am confident that no boy, who will not be allured to letters without blows, will ever be brought to anything with them. A great or good mind must necessarily be the worse for such indignities; and it is a sad change, to lose of its virtue for the improvement of its knowledge. No one who has gone through what they call a great school, but must remember to have seen children of excellent and ingenuous natures (as has afterwards appeared in their manhood): I say no man has passed through this way of education but must have seen an ingenuous creature, expiring with shame—with pale looks, beseeching sorrow, and silent tears, throw up its honest eyes, and kneel on its tender knees to an inexorable blockhead to be forgiven the false quantity of a word in making a Latin verse. The child is punished, and the next day he commits a like crime, and so a third with the same consequence. I would fain ask any reasonable man, whether this lad, in the simplicity of his native innocence, full of shame, and capable of any impression from that grace of soul, was not fitter for any purpose in this life, than after that spark of virtue is extinguished in him, though he is able to write twenty verses in an evening?

Seneca says, after his exalted way of talking, 'As

the immortal gods never learnt any virtue, though they are endued with all that is good; so there are some men who have so natural a propensity to what they should follow, that they learn it almost as soon as they hear it.' Plants and vegetables are cultivated into the production of finer fruits than they would yield without that care; and yet we cannot entertain hopes of producing a tender conscious spirit into acts of virtue, without the same methods as are used to cut timber, or give new shape to a piece of stone.

It is wholly to this dreadful practice, that we may attribute a certain hardiness and ferocity which some men, though liberally educated, carry about them in all their behaviour. To be bred like a gentleman, and punished like a malefactor, must, as we see it does, produce that illiberal sauciness which we see sometimes in men of letters.

The Spartan boy who suffered the fox (which he had stolen and hid under his coat) to eat into his bowels, I dare say had not half the wit or petulance which we learn at great schools among us; but the glorious sense of honour, or rather fear of shame, which he demonstrated in that action, was worth all the learning in the world without it.

It is, methinks, a very melancholy consideration, that a little negligence can spoil us, but great industry is necessary to improve us; the most excellent natures are soon depreciated, but evil tempers are long before they are exalted into good habits. To help this by punishments, is the same thing as killing a man to cure him of a distemper; when he comes to suffer punishment in that one circumstance, he is brought below the existence of a rational creature, and is in the state

of a brute that moves only by the admonition of stripes. But since this custom of educating by the lash is suffered by the gentry of Great Britain, I would prevail only that honest heavy lads may be dismissed from slavery sooner than they are at present, and not whipped on to their fourteenth or fifteenth year, whether they expect any progress from them or not. Let the child's capacity be forthwith examined, and he sent to some mechanic way of life, without respect to his birth, if nature designed him for nothing higher: let him go before he has innocently suffered, and is debased into a dereliction of mind for being what it is no guilt to be, a plain man. I would not here be supposed to have said, that our learned men of either robe who have been whipped at school, are not still men of noble and liberal minds; but I am sure they would have been much more so than they are, had they never suffered that infamy. . . .

[*Spectator*, No. 157.

Prince Eugene

I TAKE it to be the highest instance of a noble mind, to bear great qualities without discovering in a man's behaviour any consciousness that he is superior to the rest of the world. Or, to say it otherwise, it is the duty of a great person so to demean himself, as that whatever endowments he may have, he may appear to value himself upon no qualities but such as any man may arrive at. He ought to think no man valuable but for his public spirit, justice, and integrity: and all other endowments to be esteemed only as they contribute to the exerting those virtues. Such a man, if he is wise or valiant, knows it is of no consideration to other men that he is so, but as he employs those high talents for their use and service. He who affects the applauses and addresses of a multitude, or assumes to himself a pre-eminence upon any other consideration, must soon turn admiration into contempt. It is certain that there can be no merit in any man who is not conscious of it; but the sense that it is valuable only according to the application of it, makes that superiority amiable, which would otherwise be invidious. In this light it is considered as a thing in which every man bears a share. It annexes the ideas of dignity, power, and fame, in an agreeable and familiar manner, to him who is possessor of it; and

all men who are strangers to him are naturally incited to indulge a curiosity in beholding the person, behaviour, feature, and shape of him in whose character, perhaps, each man had formed something in common with himself.

Whether such, or any other, are the causes, all men have a yearning curiosity to behold a man of heroic worth; and I have had many letters from all parts of this kingdom, that request I would give them an exact account of the stature, the mien, the aspect of the prince who lately visited England, and has done such wonders for the liberty of Europe. It would puzzle the most curious to form to himself the sort of man my several correspondents expect to hear of by the action mentioned, when they desire a description of him. There is always something that concerns themselves, and growing out of their own circumstances, in all their inquiries. A friend of mine in Wales beseeches me to be very exact in my account of that wonderful man, who had marched an army and all its baggage over the Alps; and, if possible, to learn whether the peasant who showed him the way, and is drawn in the map, be yet living. A gentleman from the university, who is deeply intent on the study of humanity, desires me to be as particular, if I had opportunity, in observing the whole interview between his Highness and our late general. Thus do men's fancies work according to their several educations and circumstances; but all pay a respect, mixed with admiration, to this illustrious character. I have waited for his arrival in Holland, before I would let my correspondents know that I have not been so uncurious a Spectator as not to have seen Prince Eugene.

It would be very difficult, as I said just now, to answer every expectation of those who have written to me on that head; nor is it possible for me to find words to let one know what an artful glance there is in his countenance who surprised Cremona; how daring he appears who forced the trenches of Turin; but in general I can say that he who beholds him will easily expect from him anything that is to be imagined, or executed, by the wit or force of man. The prince is of that stature which makes a man most easily become all parts of exercise; has height to be graceful on occasions of state and ceremony, and no less adapted for agility and despatch: his aspect is erect and composed; his eye lively and thoughtful, yet rather vigilant than sparkling; his action and address the most easy imaginable, and his behaviour in an assembly peculiarly graceful in a certain art of mixing insensibly with the rest, and becoming one of the company, instead of receiving the courtship of it. The shape of his person, and composure of his limbs, are remarkably exact and beautiful. There is in his looks something sublime, which does not seem to arise from his quality or character, but the innate disposition of his mind. It is apparent that he suffers the presence of much company, instead of taking delight in it; and he appeared in public, while with us, rather to return good-will, or satisfy curiosity, than to gratify any taste he himself had of being popular. As his thoughts are never tumultuous in danger, they are as little discomposed on occasions of pomp and magnificence. A great soul is affected, in either case, no further than in considering the properest methods to extricate itself from them. If this hero has the

strong incentives to uncommon enterprises that were remarkable in Alexander, he prosecutes and enjoys the fame of them with the justness, propriety, and good sense of Cæsar. It is easy to observe in him a mind as capable of being entertained with contemplation as enterprise; a mind ready for great exploits, but not impatient for occasions to exert itself. The prince has wisdom and valour in as high perfection as man can enjoy it; which noble faculties, in conjunction, banish all vainglory, ostentation, ambition, and all other vices which might intrude upon his mind, to make it unequal. These habits and qualities of soul and body, render this personage so extraordinary, that he appears to have nothing in him but what every man should have in him, the exertion of his very self, abstracted from the circumstances in which fortune has placed him. Thus, were you to see Prince Eugene, and were told he was a private gentleman, you would say he is a man of modesty and merit. Should you be told that was Prince Eugene, he would be diminished no otherwise, than that part of your distant admiration would turn into a familiar good-will.

This I thought fit to entertain my reader with, concerning a hero who never was equalled but by one man; over whom also he has this advantage, that he has had an opportunity to manifest an esteem for him in his adversity.

[*Spectator*, No. 340.

The Death of Stephen Clay

THERE is a sort of delight, which is alternately mixed with terror and sorrow, in the contemplation of death. The soul has its curiosity more than ordinarily awakened, when it turns its thoughts upon the conduct of such who have behaved themselves with an equal, a resigned, a cheerful, a generous or heroic temper in that extremity. We are affected with these respective manners of behaviour, as we secretly believe the part of the dying person imitable by ourselves, or such as we imagine ourselves more particularly capable of. Men of exalted minds march before us like princes, and are, to the ordinary race of mankind, rather subjects for their admiration than example. However, there are no ideas strike more forcibly upon our imaginations, than those which are raised from reflections upon the exits of great and excellent men. Innocent men who have suffered as criminals, though they were benefactors to human society, seem to be persons of the highest distinction, among the vastly greater number of human race, the dead. When the iniquity of the times brought Socrates to his execution, how great and wonderful is it to behold him, unsupported by anything but the testimony of his own conscience and conjectures of hereafter, receive the poison with an air of mirth and good-humour, and as if going on

an agreeable journey bespeak some deity to make it fortunate!

When Phocion's good actions had met with the like reward from his country, and he was led to death with many others of his friends, they bewailing their fate, he walking composedly towards the place of execution, how gracefully does he support his illustrious character to the very last instant! One of the rabble spitting at him as he passed, with his usual authority he called to know if no one was ready to teach this fellow how to behave himself. When a poor-spirited creature that died at the same time for his crimes bemoaned himself unmanfully, he rebuked him with this question, 'Is it no consolation to such a man as thou art to die with Phocion?' At the instant when he was to die, they asked him what commands he had for his son, he answered, 'To forget this injury of the Athenians.' Niocles, his friend, under the same sentence, desired he might drink the potion before him. Phocion said, 'Because he never had denied him anything he would not even this, the most difficult request he had ever made.'

These instances were very noble and great, and the reflections of those sublime spirits had made death to them what it is really intended to be by the author of nature, a relief from a various being ever subject to sorrows and difficulties.

Epaminondas, the Theban general, having received in fight a mortal stab with a sword, which was left in his body, lay in that posture until he had intelligence that his troops had obtained the victory, and then permitted it to be drawn out, at which instant he expressed himself in this manner, 'This is not the end of my life,

my fellow-soldiers; it is now your Epaminondas is born, who dies in so much glory.'

It were an endless labour to collect the accounts with which all ages have filled the world of noble and heroic minds that have resigned this being, as if the termination of life were but an ordinary occurrence of it.

This commonplace way of thinking I fell into from an awkward endeavour to throw off a real and fresh affliction, by turning over books in a melancholy mood; but it is not easy to remove griefs which touch the heart, by applying remedies which only entertain the imagination. As therefore this paper is to consist of anything which concerns human life, I cannot help letting the present subject regard what has been the last object of my eyes, though an entertainment of sorrow.

I went this evening to visit a friend, with a design to rally him, upon a story I had heard of his intending to steal a marriage without the privity of us his intimate friends and acquaintance. I came into his apartment with that intimacy which I have done for very many years, and walked directly into his bed-chamber, where I found my friend in the agonies of death. What could I do? The innocent mirth in my thoughts struck upon me like the most flagitious wickedness: I in vain called upon him; he was senseless, and too far spent to have the least knowledge of my sorrow, or any pain in himself. Give me leave then to transcribe my soliloquy, as I stood by his mother, dumb with the weight of grief for a son who was her honour and her comfort, and never till that hour since his birth had been an occasion of a moment's sorrow to her.

'How surprising is this change! from the possession of vigorous life and strength, to be reduced in a few hours to this fatal extremity! Those lips which look so pale and livid, within these few days gave delight to all who heard their utterance. It was the business, the purpose of his being, next to obeying Him to whom he is going, to please and instruct, and that for no other end but to please and instruct. Kindness was the motive of his actions, and with all the capacity requisite for making a figure in a contentious world, moderation, good-nature, affability, temperance and chastity, were the arts of his excellent life. There as he lies in helpless agony, no wise man who knew him so well as I, but would resign all the world can bestow to be so near the end of such a life. Why does my heart so little obey my reason as to lament thee, thou excellent man?—Heaven receive him, or restore him. —Thy beloved mother, thy obliged friends, thy helpless servants, stand around thee without distinction. How much wouldst thou, hadst thou thy senses, say to each of us!

'But now that good heart bursts, and he is at rest —with that breath expired a soul who never indulged a passion unfit for the place he is gone to. Where are now thy plans of justice, of truth, of honour? Of what use the volumes thou hast collated, the arguments thou hast invented, the examples thou hast followed? Poor were the expectations of the studious, the modest and the good, if the reward of their labours were only to be expected from man. No, my friend, thy intended pleadings, thy intended good offices to thy friends, thy intended services to thy country, are already performed (as to thy concern in them) in His sight before whom

the past, present, and future appear at one view. While others with thy talents were tormented with ambition, with vainglory, with envy, with emulation how well didst thou turn thy mind to its own improvement in things out of the power of fortune, in probity, in integrity, in the practice and study of justice; how silent thy passage, how private thy journey, how glorious thy end! Many have I known more famous, some more knowing, not one so innocent.'

[*Spectator*, No. 133.

A Soldier's Letter

THERE is nothing which I contemplate with greater pleasure than the dignity of human nature, which often shows itself in all conditions of life. For, notwithstanding the degeneracy and meanness that is crept into it, there are a thousand occasions in which it breaks through its original corruption, and shows what it once was, and what it will be hereafter.' I consider the soul of man as the ruin of a glorious pile of building; where, amidst great heaps of rubbish, you meet with noble fragments of sculpture, broken pillars and obelisks, and a magnificence in confusion. Virtue and wisdom are continually employed in clearing the ruins, removing these disorderly heaps, recovering the noble pieces that lie buried under them, and adjusting them as well as possible according to their ancient symmetry and beauty. A happy education, conversation with the finest spirits, looking abroad into the works of nature, and observations upon mankind, are the great assistances to this necessary and glorious work. But even among those who have never had the happiness of any of these advantages, there are sometimes such exertions of the greatness that is natural to the mind of man, as show capacities and abilities, which only want these accidental helps to fetch them out, and show them in a proper light. A plebeian

soul is still the ruin of this glorious edifice, though encumbered with all its rubbish. This reflection rose in me from a letter which my servant dropped as he was dressing me, and which he told me was communicated to him, as he is an acquaintance of some of the persons mentioned in it. The epistle is from one Sergeant Hall of the Foot-guards. It is directed, 'To Sergeant Cabe, in the Coldstream regiment of Foot-guards, at the Red Lettice, in the Butcher Row, near Temple Bar.'

I was so pleased with several touches in it, that I could not forbear showing it to a cluster of critics, who, instead of considering it in the light I have done, examined it by the rules of epistolary writing. For as these gentlemen are seldom men of any great genius, they work altogether by mechanical rules, and are able to discover no beauties that are not pointed out by Bouhours and Rapin. The letter is as follows :—

'FROM THE CAMP BEFORE MONS,
'*26th September.*

'COMRADE,

'I received yours, and am glad yourself and your wife are in good health, with all the rest of my friends. Our battalion suffered more than I could wish in the action. But who can withstand fate? Poor Richard Stevenson had his fate with a great many more. He was killed dead before we entered the trenches. We had above two hundred of our battalion killed and wounded. We lost ten sergeants, six are as followeth :—Jennings, Castles, Roach, Sherring, Meyrick, and my son Smith. The rest are not your acquaintance. I have received a very bad shot

in my head myself, but am in hopes, and please God, I shall recover. I continue in the field, and lie at my colonel's quarters. Arthur is very well; but I can give you no account of Elms; he was in the hospital before I came into the field. I will not pretend to give you an account of the battle, knowing you have a better in the prints. Pray, give my service to Mrs. Cook and her daughter, to Mr. Stoffet and his wife, and to Mr. Lyver, and Thomas Hogsdon, and to Mr. Ragdell, and to all my friends and acquaintance in general who do ask after me. My love to Mrs. Stevenson. I am sorry for the sending such ill news. Her husband was gathering a little money together to send to his wife, and put it into my hands. I have seven shillings and threepence, which I shall take care to send her. Wishing both of you all happiness, rest

'Your assured friend, and comrade,

'JOHN HALL.

'We had but an indifferent breakfast; but the Mounseers never had such a dinner in all their lives.

'My kind love to my comrade Hinton, and Mrs. Morgan, and to John Brown and his wife. I sent two shillings, and Stevenson sixpence, to drink with you at Mr. Cook's; but I have heard nothing from him. It was by Mr. Edgar.

'Corporal Hartwell desires to be remembered to you, and desires you to inquire of Edgar, what is become of his wife Pegg; and when you write, to send word in your letter what trade she drives.

'We have here very bad weather, which I doubt will be an hindrance to the siege; but I am in hopes

we shall be masters of the town in a little time, and then, I believe, we shall go to garrison.'

I saw the critics prepared to nibble at my letter; therefore examined it myself, partly in their way, and partly my own. This is, said I, truly a letter, and an honest representation of that cheerful heart which accompanies the poor soldier in his warfare. Is not there in this all the topic of submitting to our destiny as well discussed as if a greater man had been placed, like Brutus, in his tent at midnight, reflecting on all the occurrences of past life, and saying fine things on being itself? What Sergeant Hall knows of the matter is, that he wishes there had not been so many killed; and he had himself a very bad shot in the head, and should recover if it pleased God. But, be that as it will, he takes care, like a man of honour, as he certainly is, to let the widow Stevenson know, that he had seven and threepence for her, and that, if he lives, he is sure he shall go into garrison at last. I doubt not but all the good company at the Red Lettice drank his health with as much real esteem as we do of any of our friends. All that I am concerned for is, that Mrs. Peggy Hartwell may be offended at showing this letter, because her conduct in Mr. Hartwell's absence is a little inquired into. But I could not sink that circumstance, because you critics would have lost one of the parts which I doubt not but you have much to say upon, whether the familiar way is well hit in this style or not? As for myself, I take a very particular satisfaction in seeing any letter that is fit only for those to read who are concerned in it, but especially on such a subject.

If we consider the heap of an army, utterly out of all prospect of rising and preferment, as they certainly are, and such great things executed by them, it is hard to account for the motive of their gallantry. But to me, who was a cadet at the battle of Coldstream in Scotland, when Monk charged at the head of the regiment, now called Coldstream, from the victory of that day; I remember it as well as if it were yesterday, I stood on the left of old West, who I believe is now at Chelsea; I say, to me, who know very well this part of mankind, I take the gallantry of private soldiers to proceed from the same, if not from a nobler impulse than that of gentlemen and officers. They have the same taste of being acceptable to their friends, and go through the difficulties of that profession by the same irresistible charm of fellowship, and the communication of joys and sorrows, which quickens the relish of pleasure, and abates the anguish of pain. Add to this, that they have the same regard to fame, though they do not expect so great a share as men above them hope for; but I will engage Sergeant Hall would die ten thousand deaths, rather than a word should be spoken at the Red Lettice, or any part of the Butcher Row, in prejudice to his courage or honesty. If you will have my opinion then of the sergeant's letter, I pronounce the style to be mixed, but truly epistolary; the sentiment relating to his own wound is in the sublime; the postscript of Pegg Hartwell, in the gay; and the whole the picture of the bravest sort of men, that is to say, a man of great courage and small hopes.

When I came home this evening, I found, after many attempts to vary my thoughts, that my head

still ran upon the subject of the discourse to-night at Will's. I fell, therefore, into the amusement of proportioning the glory of a battle among the whole army, and dividing it into shares, according to the method of the million lottery. In this bank of fame, by an exact calculation, and the rules of political arithmetic, I have alloted ten hundred thousand shares; five hundred thousand of which is the due of the general, two hundred thousand I assign to the general officers, and two hundred thousand more to all the commissioned officers from colonels to ensigns; the remaining hundred thousand must be distributed among the non-commissioned officers and private men: according to which computation, I find Sergeant Hall is to have one share and a fraction of two-fifths. When I was a boy at Oxford, there was among the antiquities near the theatre a great stone, on which were engraven the names of all who fell in the battle of Marathon. The generous and knowing people of Athens understood the force of the desire of glory, and would not let the meanest soldier perish in oblivion. Were the natural impulse of the British nation animated with such monuments, what man would be so mean, as not to hazard his life for his ten hundred thousandth part of the honour on such a day as that of Blenheim or Blaregnies?

[*Tatler*, No. 87.

A Day in London

IT is an inexpressible pleasure to know a little of the world, and be of no character or significancy in it.

To be ever unconcerned, and ever looking on new objects with an endless curiosity, is a delight known only to those who are turned for speculation: nay, they who enjoy it must value things only as they are the objects of speculation, without drawing any worldly advantage to themselves from them, but just as they are what contribute to their amusement, or the improvement of the mind. I lay one night last week at Richmond; and being restless, not out of dissatisfaction, but a certain busy inclination one sometimes has, I rose at four in the morning, and took boat for London, with a resolution to rove by boat and coach for the next four-and-twenty hours, till the many different objects I must needs meet with should tire my imagination, and give me an inclination to a repose more profound than I was at that time capable of. I beg people's pardon for an odd humour I am guilty of, and was often that day, which is saluting any person whom I like, whether I know him or not. This is a particularity would be tolerated in me, if they considered that the greatest pleasure I know I receive at my eyes, and that I am obliged to an agreeable person for coming abroad into my view, as

another is for a visit of conversation at their own houses.

The hours of the day and night are taken up in the cities of London and Westminster, by people as different from each other as those who are born in different centuries. Men of six o'clock give way to those of nine, they of nine to the generation of twelve; and they of twelve disappear, and make room for the fashionable world, who have made two o'clock the noon of the day.

When we first put off from shore, we soon fell in with a fleet of gardeners, bound for the several market ports of London; and it was the most pleasing scene imaginable to see the cheerfulness with which those industrious people plied their way to a certain sale of their goods. The banks on each side are as well peopled, and beautified with as agreeable plantations, as any spot on the earth; but the Thames itself, loaded with the product of each shore, added very much to the landscape. It was very easy to observe by their sailing, and the countenances of the ruddy virgins, who were supercargoes, the parts of the town to which they were bound. There was an air in the purveyors for Covent Garden, who frequently converse with morning rakes, very unlike the seeming sobriety of those bound for Stocks Market.

Nothing remarkable happened in our voyage; but I landed with ten sail of apricot-boats, at Strand Bridge, after having put in at Nine Elms, and taken in melons, consigned by Mr. Cuffe, of that place, to Sarah Sewell and Company, at their stall in Covent Garden. We arrived at Strand Bridge at six of the clock, and were unloading, when the hackney-coach-

men of the foregoing night took their leave of each other at the Dark House, to go to bed before the day was too far spent. Chimney-sweepers passed by us as we made up to the market, and some raillery happened between one of the fruit-wenches and those black men about the Devil and Eve, with allusion to their several professions. I could not believe any place more entertaining than Covent Garden; where I strolled from one fruit-shop to another, with crowds of agreeable young women around me, who were purchasing fruit for their respective families. It was almost eight of the clock before I could leave that variety of objects. I took coach and followed a young lady, who tripped into another just before me, attended by her maid. I saw immediately she was of the family of the Vainloves. There are a set of these, who, of all things, affect the play of Blindman's-buff, and leading men into love for they know not whom, who are fled they know not where. This sort of woman is usually a jaunty slattern; she hangs on her clothes, plays her head, varies her posture, and changes place incessantly, and all with an appearance of striving at the same time to hide herself, and yet give you to understand she is in humour to laugh at you. You must have often seen the coachmen make signs with their fingers, as they drive by each other, to intimate how much they have got that day. They can carry on that language to give intelligence where they are driving. In an instant my coachman took the wink to pursue; and the lady's driver gave the hint that he was going through Long Acre towards St. James's; while he whipped up James Street, we drove for King Street, to save the pass at St. Martin's Lane. The

coachmen took care to meet, jostle, and threaten each other for way, and be entangled at the end of Newport Street and Long Acre. The fright, you must believe, brought down the lady's coach-door, and obliged her, with her mask off, to inquire into the bustle,—when she sees the man she would avoid. The tackle of the coach-window is so bad she cannot draw it up again, and she drives on sometimes wholly discovered, and sometimes half escaped, according to the accident of carriages in her way. One of these ladies keeps her seat in a hackney-coach as well as the best rider does on a managed horse. The laced shoe of her left foot, with a careless gesture, just appearing on the opposite cushion, held her both firm, and in a proper attitude to receive the next jolt.

As she was an excellent coach-woman, many were the glances at each other which we had for an hour and a-half, in all parts of the town, by the skill of our drivers; till at last my lady was conveniently lost, with notice from her coachman to ours to make off, and he should hear where she went. This chase was now at an end: and the fellow who drove her came to us, and discovered that he was ordered to come again in an hour, for that she was a silkworm. I was surprised with this phrase, but found it was a cant among the hackney fraternity for their best customers, women who ramble twice or thrice a week from shop to shop, to turn over all the goods in town without buying anything. The silkworms are, it seems, indulged by the tradesmen; for, though they never buy, they are ever talking of new silks, laces, and ribbons, and serve the owners in getting them customers, as their common dunners do in making them pay.

The day of people of fashion began now to break, and carts and hacks were mingled with equipages of show and vanity; when I resolved to walk it, out of cheapness; but my unhappy curiosity is such, that I find it always my interest to take coach; for some odd adventure among beggars, ballad-singers, or the like, detains and throws me into expense. It happened so immediately: for at the corner of Warwick Street, as I was listening to a new ballad, a ragged rascal, a beggar who knew me, came up to me, and began to turn the eyes of the good company upon me, by telling me he was extremely poor, and should die in the street for want of drink, except I immediately would have the charity to give him sixpence to go into the next alehouse and save his life. He urged, with a melancholy face, that all his family had died of thirst. All the mob have humour, and two or three began to take the jest; by which Mr. Sturdy carried his point, and let me sneak off to a coach. As I drove along, it was a pleasing reflection to see the world so prettily checkered since I left Richmond, and the scene still filling with children of a new hour. This satisfaction increased as I moved towards the city; and gay signs, well-disposed streets, magnificent public structures, and wealthy shops adorned with contented faces, made the joy still rising till we came into the centre of the city, and centre of the world of trade, the Exchange of London. As other men in the crowds about me were pleased with their hopes and bargains, I found my account in observing them, in attention to their several interests. I, indeed, looked upon myself as the richest man that walked the Exchange that day; for my benevolence made me share the gains of every

bargain that was made. It was not the least of my satisfaction in my survey, to go upstairs, and pass the shops of agreeable females; to observe so many pretty hands busy in the folding of ribbons, and the utmost eagerness of agreeable faces in the sale of patches, pins, and wires, on each side of the counters, was an amusement in which I could longer have indulged myself, had not the dear creatures called to me, to ask what I wanted, when I could not answer, only 'To look at you.' I went to one of the windows which opened to the area below, where all the several voices lost their distinction, and rose up in a confused humming; which created in me a reflection that could not come into the mind of any but of one a little too studious; for I said to myself with a kind of pun in thought, 'What nonsense is all the hurry of this world to those who are above it?' In these, or not much wiser thoughts, I had like to have lost my place at the chop-house, where every man, according to the natural bashfulness or sullenness of our nation, eats in a public room a mess of broth, or chop of meat, in dumb silence, as if they had no pretence to speak to each other on the foot of being men, except they were of each other's acquaintance.

I went afterward to Robin's, and saw people, who had dined with me at the fivepenny ordinary just before, give bills for the value of large estates: and could not but behold with great pleasure, property lodged in, and transferred in a moment from, such as would never be masters of half as much as is seemingly in them, and given from them, every day they live. But before five in the afternoon I left the city, came to my common scene of Covent Garden, and passed

the evening at Will's in attending the discourses of several sets of people, who relieved each other within my hearing on the subjects of cards, dice, love, learning, and politics. The last subject kept me till I heard the streets in the possession of the bellman, who had now the world to himself, and cried, 'Past two o'clock.' This roused me from my seat; and I went to my lodgings, led by a light, whom I put into the discourse of his private economy, and made him give me an account of the charge, hazard, profit, and loss, of a family that depended upon a link, with a design to end my trivial day with the generosity of sixpence, instead of a third part of that sum. When I came to my chambers, I writ down these minutes; but was at a loss what instruction I should propose to my reader from the enumeration of so many insignificant matters and occurrences; and I thought it of great use, if they could learn with me to keep their minds open to gratification, and ready to receive it from anything it meets with. This one circumstance will make every face you see give you the satisfaction you now take in beholding that of a friend; will make every object a pleasing one; will make all the good which arrives to any man, an increase of happiness to yourself.

[*Spectator*, No. 454.

A Combat at Hockley-in-the-Hole

BEING a person of insatiable curiosity, I could not forbear going on Wednesday last to a place of no small renown for the gallantry of the lower order of Britons, namely, to the Bear-garden, at Hockley-in-the-Hole: where (as a whitish-brown paper, put into my hands in the street, informed me) there was to be a trial of skill exhibited between two masters of the noble science of defence, at two of the clock precisely. I was not a little charmed with the solemnity of the challenge, which ran thus :—

'I, James Miller, sergeant, lately come from the frontiers of Portugal, master of the noble science of defence, hearing in most places where I have been, of the great fame of Timothy Buck, of London, master of the said science, do invite him to meet me and exercise at the several weapons following, viz. :—

'Backsword,	Single falchion,
Sword and dagger,	Case of falchions,
Sword and buckler,	Quarter-staff.'

If the generous ardour in James Miller to dispute the reputation of Timothy Buck had something resembling the old heroes of romance, Timothy Buck returned answer in the same paper with the like spirit,

adding a little indignation at being challenged, and seeming to condescend to fight James Miller, not in regard to Miller himself, but in that, as the fame went out, he had fought Parkes of Coventry. The acceptance of the combat ran in these words :—

'I, Timothy Buck, of Clare Market, master of the noble science of defence, hearing he did fight Mr. Parkes of Coventry, will not fail (God willing) to meet this fair inviter at the time and place appointed, desiring a clear stage and no favour.—*Vivat Regina.*'

I shall not here look back on the spectacles of the Greeks and Romans of this kind, but must believe this custom took its rise from the ages of knight-errantry; from those who loved one woman so well, that they hated all men and women else; from those who would fight you, whether you were or were not of their mind; from those who demanded the combat of their contemporaries, both for admiring their mistress or discommending her. I cannot therefore but lament, that the terrible part of the ancient fight is preserved, when the amorous side of it is forgotten. We have retained the barbarity, but lost the gallantry of the old combatants. I could wish, methinks, these gentlemen had consulted me in the promulgation of the conflict. I was obliged by a fair young maid, whom I understood to be called Elizabeth Preston, daughter of the keeper of the garden, with a glass of water; who I imagined might have been, for form's sake, the general representative of the lady fought for, and from her beauty the proper Amaryllis on these occasions. It would have run better in the challenge, 'I, James

Miller, sergeant, who have travelled parts abroad, and came last from the frontiers of Portugal, for the love of Elizabeth Preston, do assert that the said Elizabeth is the fairest of women.' Then the answer: 'I, Timothy Buck, who have stayed in Great Britain during all the war in foreign parts, for the sake of Susannah Page, do deny that Elizabeth Preston is so fair as the said Susannah Page. Let Susannah Page look on, and I desire of James Miller no favour.'

This would give the battle quite another turn; and a proper station for the ladies, whose complexion was disputed by the sword, would animate the disputants with a more gallant incentive than the expectation of money from the spectators; though I would not have that neglected, but thrown to that fair one whose lover was approved by the donor.

Yet, considering the thing wants such amendments, it was carried with great order. James Miller came on first, preceded by two disabled drummers, to show, I suppose, that the prospect of maimed bodies did not in the least deter him. There ascended with the daring Miller a gentleman, whose name I could not learn, with a dogged air, as unsatisfied that he was not principal. This son of anger lowered at the whole assembly, and, weighing himself as he marched around from side to side, with a stiff knee and shoulder, he gave intimations of the purpose he smothered till he saw the issue of this encounter. Miller had a blue ribbon tied round the sword arm; which ornament I conceive to be the remain of that custom of wearing a mistress's favour on such occasions of old.

Miller is a man of six foot eight inches in height, of a kind but bold aspect, well fashioned, and ready, of

his limbs, and such a readiness as spoke his ease in them was obtained from a habit of motion in military exercise.

The expectation of the spectators was now almost at its height; and the crowd pressing in, several active persons thought they were placed rather according to their fortune than their merit, and took it in their heads to prefer themselves from the open area or pit to the galleries. This dispute between desert and property brought many to the ground, and raised others in proportion to the highest seats by turns, for the space of ten minutes, till Timothy Buck came on, and the whole assembly, giving up their disputes, turned their eyes upon the champions. Then it was that every man's affection turned to one or the other irresistibly. A judicious gentleman near me said, 'I could, methinks, be Miller's second, but I had rather have Buck for mine.' Miller had an audacious look that took the eye; Buck a perfect composure, that engaged the judgment. Buck came on in a plain coat, and kept all his air till the instant of engaging; at which time he undressed to his shirt, his arm adorned with a bandage of red ribbon. No one can describe the sudden concern in the whole assembly; the most tumultuous crowd in nature was as still and as much engaged as if all their lives depended on the first blow. The combatants met in the middle of the stage, and shaking hands, as removing all malice, they retired with much grace to the extremities of it; from whence they immediately faced about, and approached each other, Miller with a heart full of resolution, Buck with a watchful untroubled countenance: Buck regarding principally his own defence, Miller chiefly thought-

ful of annoying his opponent. It is not easy to describe the many escapes and imperceptible defences between two men of quick eyes and ready limbs; but Miller's heat laid him open to the rebuke of the calm Buck, by a large cut on the forehead. Much effusion of blood covered his eyes in a moment, and the huzzas of the crowd undoubtedly quickened the anguish. The assembly was divided into parties upon their different ways of fighting; while a poor nymph in one of the galleries apparently suffered for Miller, and burst into a flood of tears. As soon as his wound was wrapped up, he came on again with a little rage, which still disabled him further. But what brave man can be wounded into more caution and patience? The next was a warm eager onset, which ended in a decisive stroke on the left leg of Miller. The lady in the gallery, during this second strife, covered her face, and for my part, I could not keep my thoughts from being mostly employed on the consideration of her unhappy circumstance that moment, hearing the clash of swords, and apprehending life or victory concerned her lover in every blow, but not daring to satisfy herself on whom they fell. The wound was exposed to the view of all who could delight in it, and sewed up on the stage. The surly second of Miller declared at this time, that he would that day fortnight fight Mr. Buck at the same weapons, declaring himself the master of the renowned Gorman; but Buck denied him the honour of that courageous disciple, and, asserting that he himself had taught that champion, accepted the challenge.

There is something in nature very unaccountable on such occasions, when we see the people take a certain

painful gratification in beholding these encounters. Is it cruelty that administers this sort of delight? or is it a pleasure that is taken in the exercise of pity? It was, methought, pretty remarkable that the business of the day being a trial of skill, the popularity did not run so high as one would have expected on the side of Buck. Is it that people's passions have their rise in self-love, and thought themselves (in spite of all the courage they had) liable to the fate of Miller, but could not so easily think themselves qualified like Buck?

Tully speaks of this custom with less horror than one would expect, though he confesses it was much abused in his time, and seems directly to approve of it under its first regulations, when criminals only fought before the people. '*Crudele Gladiatorum spectaculum et inhumanum nonnullis videri solet; et haud scio annon ita sit ut nunc fit; cum vero sontes ferro depugnabant, auribus fortasse multa, oculis quidem nulla, poterat esse fortior contra dolorem et mortem disciplina.*' 'The shows of gladiators may be thought barbarous and inhuman, and I know not but it is so as it is now practised; but in those times when only criminals were combatants, the ear perhaps might receive many better instructions, but it is impossible that anything which affects our eyes should fortify us so well against pain and death.'

[*Spectator*, No. 436.

A Cure for the Spleen

IT will be allowed me, that I have all along showed great respect in matters which concern the fair sex; but the inhumanity with which the author of the following letter has been used is not to be suffered.

'*October* 9.

'SIR,

'Yesterday I had the misfortune to drop in at my Lady Haughty's, upon her visiting-day. When I entered the room where she receives company, they all stood up indeed; but they stood as if they were to stare at rather than to receive me. After a long pause, a servant brought a round stool, on which I sat down at the lower end of the room, in the presence of no less than twelve persons, gentlemen and ladies, lolling in elbow-chairs. And, to complete my disgrace, my mistress was of the society. I tried to compose myself in vain, not knowing how to dispose of either my legs or arms, nor how to shape my countenance; the eyes of the whole room being still upon me in a profound silence. My confusion at last was so great, that, without speaking, or being spoken to, I fled for it, and left the assembly to treat me at their discretion. A lecture from you upon these inhuman distinctions in a free nation, will, I doubt not, prevent the like evils for the

future, and make it, as we say, as cheap sitting as standing. I am, with the greatest respect, sir,

'Your most humble, and most obedient servant,

'J. R.

'*P.S.*—I had almost forgot to inform you, that a fair young lady sat in an armless chair upon my right hand, with manifest discontent in her looks.'

Soon after the receipt of this epistle, I heard a very gentle knock at my door: my maid went down, and brought up word, 'that a tall, lean, black man, well dressed, who said he had not the honour to be acquainted with me, desired to be admitted.' I bid her show him up, met him at my chamber-door, and then fell back a few paces. He approached me with great respect, and told me, with a low voice, 'he was the gentleman that had been seated upon the round stool.' I immediately recollected that there was a joint-stool in my chamber, which I was afraid he might take for an instrument of distinction, and therefore winked at my boy to carry it into my closet. I then took him by the hand, and led him to the upper end of my room, where I placed him in my great elbow-chair; at the same time drawing another without arms to it, for myself to sit by him. I then asked him, 'at what time this misfortune befell him?' He answered, 'between the hours of seven and eight in the evening. I further demanded of him, 'what he had eat or drunk that day?' he replied, 'nothing but a dish of water-gruel with a few plums in it.' In the next place, I felt his pulse, which was very low and languishing. These circumstances confirmed me in an opinion, which I

had entertained upon the first reading of his letter, that the gentleman was far gone in the spleen. I therefore advised him to rise the next morning, and plunge into the cold bath, there to remain under water until he was almost drowned. This I ordered him to repeat six days successively; and on the seventh, to repair at the wonted hour to my Lady Haughty's, and to acquaint me afterwards with what he shall meet with there; and particularly to tell me, whether he shall think they stared upon him so much as the time before. The gentleman smiled; and, by his way of talking to me, showed himself a man of excellent sense in all particulars, unless when a cane-chair, a round or a joint-stool, were spoken of. He opened his heart to me at the same time concerning several other grievances; such as, being overlooked in public assemblies, having his bows unanswered, being helped last at table, and placed at the back part of a coach; with many other distresses, which have withered his countenance, and worn him to a skeleton. Finding him a man of reason, I entered into the bottom of his distemper. 'Sir,' said I, 'there are more of your constitution in this island of Great Britain than in any other part of the world; and I beg the favour of you to tell me, whether you do not observe, that you meet with most affronts in rainy days?' He answered candidly, 'that he had long observed, that people were less saucy in sunshine than in cloudy weather.' Upon which I told him plainly, 'his distemper was the spleen; and that though the world was very ill-natured, it was not so bad as he believed it.' I further assured him, 'that his use of the cold bath, with a course of steel which I should prescribe him, would certainly

cure most of his acquaintance of their rudeness, ill-behaviour, and impertinence.' My patient smiled, and promised to observe my prescriptions, not forgetting to give me an account of their operation. This distemper being pretty epidemical, I shall, for the benefit of mankind, give the public an account of the progress I make in the cure of it.

[*Tatler*, No. 80.

The Cock's Petition

I WAS awakened very early this morning by the distant crowing of a cock, which I thought had the finest pipe I ever heard. He seemed to me to strain his voice more than ordinary, as if he designed to make himself heard to the remotest corner of this lane. Having entertained myself a little before I went to bed with a discourse on the transmigration of men into other animals, I could not but fancy that this was the soul of some drowsy bellman who used to sleep upon his post, for which he was condemned to do penance in feathers, and distinguish the several watches of the night under the outside of a cock. While I was thinking of the condition of this poor bellman in masquerade, I heard a great knocking at my door, and was soon after told by my maid, that my worthy friend the tall black gentleman, who frequents the coffee-houses hereabouts, desired to speak me. This ancient Pythagorean, who has as much honesty as any man living, but good-nature to an excess, brought me the following petition; which I am apt to believe he penned himself, the petitioner not being able to express his mind on paper under his present form, however famous he might have been for writing verses when he was in his original shape.

'To ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, Esquire, Censor of Great Britain,

'The humble petition of Job Chanticleer, in behalf of himself, and many other poor sufferers in the same condition,

'FROM MY COOP IN CLARE MARKET, 13*th February* 1709.

'SHEWETH,

'That whereas your petitioner is truly descended of the ancient family of the Chanticleers, at Cock Hall near Rumford in Essex, it has been his misfortune to come into the mercenary hands of a certain ill-disposed person, commonly called an higgler, who, under the close confinement of a pannier, has conveyed him and many others up to London; but hearing by chance of your worship's great humanity towards robin-red-breasts and tom-tits, he is emboldened to beseech you to take his deplorable condition into your tender consideration, who otherwise must suffer, with many thousands more as innocent as himself, that inhuman barbarity of a Shrove-Tuesday persecution. We humbly hope, that our courage and vigilance may plead for us on this occasion.

'Your poor petitioner most earnestly implores your immediate protection from the insolence of the rabble, the batteries of cat-sticks, and a painful lingering death.

'And your petitioner, etc.'

Upon delivery of this petition, the worthy gentleman, who presented it, told me the customs of many wise nations of the East, through which he had travelled; that nothing was more frequent than to see

a Dervish lay out a whole year's income in the redemption of larks or linnets, that had unhappily fallen into the hands of bird-catchers: that it was also usual to run between a dog and a bull to keep them from hurting one another, or to lose the use of a limb in parting a couple of furious mastiffs. He then insisted upon the ingratitude and disingenuity of treating in this manner a necessary and domestic animal, that has made the whole house keep good hours, and called up the cook-maid for five years together. 'What would a Turk say,' continued he, 'should he hear, that it is a common entertainment in a nation, which pretends to be one of the most civilised of Europe, to tie an innocent animal to a stake, and put him to an ignominious death, who has perhaps been the guardian and proveditor of a poor family, as long as he was able to get eggs for his mistress?'

I thought what this gentleman said was very reasonable; and have often wondered, that we do not lay aside a custom, which makes us appear barbarous to nations much more rude and unpolished than ourselves. Some French writers have represented this diversion of the common people much to our disadvantage, and imputed it to natural fierceness and cruelty of temper; as they do some other entertainments peculiar to our nation: I mean those elegant diversions of bull-baiting and prize-fighting, with the like ingenious recreations of the bear-garden. I wish I knew how to answer this reproach which is cast upon us, and excuse the death of so many innocent cocks, bulls, dogs, and bears, as have been set together by the ears, or died untimely deaths, only to make us sport.

It will be said, that these are the entertainments of common people. It is true; but they are the entertainments of no other common people. Besides, I am afraid, there is a tincture of the same savage spirit in the diversions of those of higher rank, and more refined relish. Rapin observes, that the English theatre very much delights in bloodshed, which he likewise represents as an indication of our tempers. I must own, there is something very horrid in the public executions of an English tragedy. Stabbing and poisoning, which are performed behind the scenes in other nations, must be done openly among us, to gratify the audience.

When poor Sandford was upon the stage, I have seen him groaning upon a wheel, stuck with daggers, impaled alive, calling his executioners, with a dying voice, 'cruel dogs and villains!' and all this to please his judicious spectators, who were wonderfully delighted with seeing a man in torment so well acted. The truth of it is, the politeness of our English stage, in regard to decorum, is very extraordinary. We act murders, to show our intrepidity; and adulteries, to show our gallantry: both of them are frequent in our most taking plays, with this difference only, that the former are done in the sight of the audience, and the latter wrought up to such an height upon the stage, that they are almost put in execution before the actors can get behind the scenes.

I would not have it thought, that there is just ground for those consequences which our enemies draw against us from these practices; but methinks one would be sorry for any manner of occasion for such misrepresentations of us. The virtues of tender-

ness, compassion, and humanity, are those by which men are distinguished from brutes, as much as by reason itself; and it would be the greatest reproach to a nation, to distinguish itself from all others by any defect in these particular virtues. For which reasons, I hope that my dear countrymen will no longer expose themselves by an effusion of blood, whether it be of theatrical heroes, cocks, or any other innocent animals, which we are not obliged to slaughter for our safety, convenience, or nourishment. When any of these ends are not served in the destruction of a living creature, I cannot but pronounce it a great piece of cruelty, if not a kind of murder.

[*Tatler*, No. 134.

False Exaltation of Women

WHEN I reflect upon the many nights I have sat up for some months last past, in the greatest anxiety for the good of my neighbours and contemporaries, it is no small discouragement to me, to see how slow a progress I make in the reformation of the world. But indeed I must do my female readers the justice to own, that their tender hearts are much more susceptible of good impressions, than the minds of the other sex. Business and ambition take up men's thoughts too much to leave room for philosophy: but if you speak to women in a style and manner proper to approach them, they never fail to improve by your counsels. I shall, therefore, for the future, turn my thoughts more particularly to their service; and study the best methods to adorn their persons, and inform their minds in the justest methods to make them what nature designed them, the most beauteous objects of our eyes, and the most agreeable companions of our lives. But, when I say this, I must not omit at the same time to look into their errors and mistakes, that being the readiest way to the intended end of adorning and instructing them. It must be acknowledged, that the very inadvertences of this sex are owing to the other; for if men were not flatterers, women could not fall into that general cause of all their follies, and

our misfortunes, their love of flattery. Were the commendation of these agreeable creatures built upon its proper foundation, the higher we raised their opinion of themselves, the greater would be the advantage to our sex; but all the topic of praise is drawn from very senseless and extravagant ideas we pretend we have of their beauty and perfection. Thus, when a young man falls in love with a young woman, from that moment she is no more Mrs. Alice Such-a-one, born of such a father, and educated by such a mother; but from the first minute that he casts his eye upon her with desire, he conceives a doubt in his mind, what heavenly power gave so unexpected a blow to an heart that was ever before untouched. But who can resist fate and destiny, which are lodged in Mrs. Alice's eyes? after which he desires orders accordingly, whether he is to live or die; the smile or frown of his goddess is the only thing that can now either save or destroy him. By this means, the well-humoured girl, that would have romped with him before she had received this declaration, assumes a state suitable to the majesty he has given her, and treats him as the vassal he calls himself. The girl's head is immediately turned by having the power of life and death, and takes care to suit every motion and air to her new sovereignty. After he has placed himself at this distance, he must never hope to recover his former familiarity, until she has had the addresses of another, and found them less sincere.

If the application to women were justly turned, the address of flattery, though it implied at the same time an admonition, would be much more likely to succeed. Should a captivated lover, in a billet, let his mistress

know, that her piety to her parents, her gentleness of behaviour, her prudent economy with respect to her own little affairs in a virgin condition, had improved the passion which her beauty had inspired him with, into so settled an esteem for her, that of all women breathing he wished her his wife; though his commending her for qualities she knew she had as a virgin, would make her believe he expected from her an answerable conduct in the character of a matron; I will answer for it, his suit would be carried on with less perplexity.

Instead of this, the generality of our young women, taking all their notions of life from gay writings, or letters of love, consider themselves as goddesses, nymphs, and shepherdesses.

By this romantic sense of things, all the natural relations and duties of life are forgotten; and our female part of mankind are bred and treated, as if they were designed to inhabit the happy fields of Arcadia, rather than be wives and mothers in Old England. It is, indeed, long since I had the happiness to converse familiarly with this sex, and therefore have been fearful of falling into the error which recluse men are very subject to, that of giving false representations of the world, from which they have retired, by imaginary schemes drawn from their own reflections. An old man cannot easily gain admittance into the dressing-room of ladies; I therefore thought it time well spent, to turn over Agrippa, and use all my occult art, to give my old Cornelian ring the same force with that of Gyges, which I have lately spoken of. By the help of this I went unobserved to a friend's house of mine, and followed the chambermaid invisibly about

twelve of the clock into the bedchamber of the beauteous Flavia, his fine daughter, just before she got up.

I drew the curtains; and being wrapped up in the safety of my old age, could with much pleasure, without passion, behold her sleeping with Waller's *Poems*, and a letter fixed in that part of him where every woman thinks herself described. The light flashing upon her face, awakened her: she opened her eyes, and her lips too, repeating that piece of false wit in that admired poet:

'Such Helen was: and who can blame the boy,
That in so bright a flame consum'd his Troy?'

This she pronounced with a most bewitching sweetness; but after it fetched a sigh, that methought had more desire than languishment: then took out her letter; and read aloud, for the pleasure, I suppose, of hearing soft words in praise of herself, the following epistle:

'MADAM,

'I sat near you at the opera last night; but knew no entertainment from the vain show and noise about me, while I waited wholly intent upon the motion of your bright eyes, in hopes of a glance, that might restore me to the pleasures of sight and hearing in the midst of beauty and harmony. It is said, the hell of the accursed in the next life arises from an incapacity to partake the joys of the blessed, though they were to be admitted to them. Such, I am sure, was my condition all that evening; and if you, my deity, cannot have so much mercy, as to make me by your influence capable of tasting the satisfactions of life, my being is ended, which consisted only in your favour.'

The letter was hardly read over, when she rushed out of bed in her wrapping-gown, and consulted her glass for the truth of his passion. She raised her head, and turned it to a profile, repeating the last lines, 'My being is ended, which consisted only in your favour.' The goddess immediately called her maid, and fell to dressing that mischievous face of hers, without any manner of consideration for the mortal who had offered up his petition. Nay, it was so far otherwise, that the whole time of her woman's combing her hair was spent in discourse of the impertinence of his passion, and ended in declaring a resolution, 'if she ever had him, to make him wait.' She also frankly told the favourite gypsy that was prating to her, 'that her passionate lover had put it out of her power to be civil to him, if she were inclined to it; for,' said she, 'if I am thus celestial to my lover, he will certainly so far think himself disappointed, as I grow into the familiarity and form of a mortal woman.'

I came away as I went in, without staying for other remarks than what confirmed me in the opinion, that it is from the notions the men inspire them with, that the women are so fantastical in the value of themselves. This imaginary pre-eminence which is given to the fair sex, is not only formed from the addresses of people of condition; but it is the fashion and humour of all orders to go regularly out of their wits, as soon as they begin to make love. I know at this time three goddesses in the New Exchange; and there are two shepherdesses that sell gloves in Westminster Hall.

[*Tatler*, No. 139.

Matrimonial Happiness

MANY are the epistles I every day receive from husbands, who complain of vanity, pride, but above all ill-nature, in their wives. I cannot tell how it is, but I think I see in all their letters that the cause of their uneasiness is in themselves; and indeed I have hardly ever observed the married condition unhappy, but from want of judgment or temper in the man. The truth is, we generally make love in a style, and with sentiments very unfit for ordinary life: they are half theatrical, half romantic. By this means we raise our imaginations to what is not to be expected in human life; and because we did not beforehand think of the creature we were enamoured of as subject to dishumour, age, sickness, impatience or sullenness, but altogether considered her as the object of joy, human nature itself is often imputed to her as her particular imperfection or defect.

I take it to be a rule proper to be observed in all occurrences of life, but more especially in the domestic or matrimonial part of it, to preserve always a disposition to be pleased. This cannot be supported but by considering things in their right light, and as nature has formed them, and not as our own fancies or appetites would have them. He then who took a young lady to his home, with no other consideration than the expectation of scenes of dalliance, and thought of her (as I said before) only as she was to administer

to the gratification of desire; as that desire flags, will, without her fault, think her charms and her merit abated. From hence must follow indifference, dislike peevishness, and rage. But the man who brings his reason to support his passion, and beholds what he loves as liable to all the calamities of human life both in body and mind, and even at the best what must bring upon him new cares and new relations; such a lover, I say, will form himself accordingly, and adapt his mind to the nature of his circumstances. This latter person will be prepared to be a father, a friend, an advocate, a steward for people yet unborn, and has proper affections ready for every incident in the marriage state. Such a man can hear the cries of children with pity instead of anger; and when they run over his head, he is not disturbed at their noise, but is glad of their mirth and health. Tom Trusty has told me, that he thinks it doubles his attention to the most intricate affair he is about, to hear his children, for whom all his cares are applied, make a noise in the next room. On the other side, Will Sparkish cannot put on his periwig, or adjust his cravat at the glass, for the noise of those damned nurses and squalling brats; and then ends with a gallant reflection upon the comforts of matrimony, runs out of the hearing, and drives to the chocolate-house.

According as the husband is disposed in himself, every circumstance of his life is to give him torment or pleasure. When the affection is well placed, and supported by the considerations of duty, honour, and friendship, which are in the highest degree engaged in this alliance, there can nothing rise in the common course of life, or from the blows or favours of fortune,

in which a man will not find matters of some delight unknown to a single condition.

He who sincerely loves his wife and family, and studies to improve that affection in himself, conceives pleasure from the most indifferent things; while the married man, who has not bid adieu to the fashions and false gallantries of the town, is perplexed with everything around him. In both these cases men cannot, indeed, make a sillier figure, than in repeating such pleasures and pains to the rest of the world; but I speak of them only, as they sit upon those who are involved in them. As I visit all sorts of people, I cannot indeed but smile, when the good lady tells her husband what extraordinary things the child spoke since he went out. No longer than yesterday I was prevailed with to go home with a fond husband: and his wife told him, that his son, of his own head, when the clock in the parlour struck two, said, 'Papa would come home to dinner presently.' While the father has him in a rapture in his arms, and is drowning him with kisses, the wife tells me he is but just four years old. Then they both struggle for him, and bring him up to me, and repeat his observation of two o'clock. I was called upon, by looks upon the child, and then at me, to say something; and I told the father, 'that this remark of the infant of his coming home, and joining the time with it, was a certain indication that he would be a great historian and chronologer.' They are neither of them fools, yet received my compliment with great acknowledgment of my prescience. I fared very well at dinner, and heard many other notable sayings of their heir, which would have given very little entertainment to one less turned to reflection

than I was; but it was a pleasing speculation to remark on the happiness of a life, in which things of no moment give occasion of hope, self-satisfaction, and triumph. On the other hand, I have known an ill-natured coxcomb, who was hardly improved in anything but bulk, for want of this disposition, silence the whole family, as a set of silly women and children, for recounting things which were really above his own capacity.

When I say all this, I cannot deny but there are perverse jades that fall to men's lots, with whom it requires more than common proficiency in philosophy to be able to live. When these are joined to men of warm spirits, without temper or learning, they are frequently corrected with stripes; but one of our famous lawyers is of opinion, 'that this ought to be used sparingly.' As I remember, those are his very words; but as it is proper to draw some spiritual use out of all afflictions, I should rather recommend to those who are visited with women of spirit, to form themselves for the world by patience at home. Socrates, who is by all accounts the undoubted head of the sect of the henpecked, owned and acknowledged that he owed great part of his virtue to the exercise which his useful wife constantly gave it. There are several good instructions may be drawn from his wise answers to people of less fortitude than himself on her subject. A friend, with indignation, asked how so good a man could live with so violent a creature? He observed to him, 'that they who learn to keep a good seat on horseback, mount the least manageable they can get, and when they have mastered them, they are sure never to be discomposed on the backs of steeds less restive.'

At several times, to different persons, on the same subject, he has said, 'My dear friend, you are beholden to Xantippe, that I bear so well your flying out in a dispute.' To another, 'My hen clacks very much, but she brings me chickens. They that live in a trading street, are not disturbed at the passage of carts.' I would have, if possible, a wise man be contented with his lot, even with a shrew; for though he cannot make her better, he may, you see, make himself better by her means.

But instead of pursuing my design of displaying conjugal love in its natural beauties and attractions, I am got into tales to the disadvantage of that state of life. I must say, therefore, that I am verily persuaded that whatever is delightful in human life, is to be enjoyed in greater perfection in the married, than in the single condition. He that has this passion in perfection, in occasions of joy can say to himself, besides his own satisfaction, 'How happy will this make my wife and children!' Upon occurrences of distress or danger can comfort himself, 'But, all this while my wife and children are safe.' There is something in it that doubles satisfactions, because others participate them; and dispels afflictions, because others are exempt from them. All who are married without this relish of their circumstance, are in either a tasteless indolence and negligence, which is hardly to be attained, or else live in the hourly repetition of sharp answers, eager upbraidings, and distracting reproaches. In a word the married state, with and without the affection suitable to it, is the completest image of heaven and hell we are capable of receiving in this life.

[*Spectator*, No. 479.

On Scolds

As I was passing by a neighbour's house this morning, I overheard the wife of the family speaking things to her husband which gave me much disturbance, and put me in mind of a character which I wonder I have so long omitted, and that is, an outrageous species of the fair sex which is distinguished by the term Scolds. The generality of women are by nature loquacious; therefore mere volubility of speech is not to be imputed to them, but should be considered with pleasure when it is used to express such passions as tend to sweeten or adorn conversation: but when through rage, females are vehement in their eloquence, nothing in the world has so ill an effect upon the features; for, by the force of it, I have seen the most amiable become the most deformed; and she that appeared one of the graces, immediately turned into one of the furies. I humbly conceive, the great cause of this evil may proceed from a false notion the ladies have of, what we call, a modest woman. They have too narrow a conception of this lovely character; and believe they have not at all forfeited their pretensions to it, provided they have no imputations on their chastity. But, alas! the young fellows know they pick out better women in the side-boxes, than many of those who pass upon the world and themselves for modest.

Modesty never rages, never murmurs, never pouts; when it is ill-treated, it pines, it beseeches, it languishes. The neighbour I mention is one of your common modest women, that is to say, those who are ordinarily reckoned such. Her husband knows every pain in life with her but jealousy. Now, because she is clear in this particular, the man cannot say his soul is his own, but she cries, 'No modest woman is respected nowadays.' What adds to the comedy in this case is, that it is very ordinary with this sort of women to talk in the language of distress; they will complain of the forlorn wretchedness of their condition, and then the poor helpless creatures shall throw the next thing they can lay their hands on at the person who offends them. Our neighbour was only saying to his wife, 'she went a little too fine,' when she immediately pulled his periwig off, and stamping it under her feet, wrung her hands and said: 'Never modest woman was so used.' These ladies of irresistible modesty are those who make virtue unamiable; not that they can be said to be virtuous, but as they live without scandal; and being under the common denomination of being such, men fear to meet their faults in those who are as agreeable as they are innocent.

I take the Bully among men, and the Scold among women, to draw the foundation of their actions from the same defect in the mind. A Bully thinks honour consists wholly in being brave; and therefore has regard to no one rule of life if he preserves himself from the accusation of cowardice. The froward woman knows chastity to be the first merit in a woman; and therefore, since no one can call her one ugly name, she calls all mankind all the rest.

These ladies, where their companions are so imprudent as to take their speeches for any other than exercises of their own lungs and their husbands' patience, gain by the force of being resisted, and flame with open fury, which is no way to be opposed but by being neglected; though at the same time human frailty makes it very hard, to relish the philosophy of contemning even frivolous reproach. There is a very pretty instance of this infirmity in the man of the best sense that ever was, no less a person than Adam himself. According to Milton's description of the first couple, as soon as they had fallen, and the turbulent passions of anger, hatred, and jealousy, first entered their breasts, Adam grew moody, and talked to his wife, as you may find it in the three hundred and fifty-ninth page, and ninth book of *Paradise Lost*, in the octavo edition, which, out of heroics, and put into domestic style, would run thus:

'Madam, if my advices had been of any authority with you, when that strange desire of gadding possessed you this morning, we had still been happy; but your cursed vanity and opinion of your own conduct, which is certainly very wavering when it seeks occasions of being proved, has ruined both yourself and me, who trusted you.'

Eve had no fan in her hand to ruffle, or tucker to pull down; but with a reproachful air she answered:

'Sir, do you impute that to my desire of gadding, which might have happened to yourself, with all your wisdom and gravity? The serpent spoke so excellently, and with so good a grace, that——besides, what harm had I ever done him, that he should design me any? Was I to have been always at your side, I

might as well have continued there, and been but your rib still: but if I was so weak a creature as you thought me, why did you not interpose your sage authority more absolutely? You denied me going as faintly, as you say I resisted the serpent. Had not you been too easy, neither you nor I had now transgressed.' Adam replied, 'Why, Eve, hast thou the impudence to upbraid me as the cause of thy transgression for my indulgence to thee? Thus will it ever be with him who trusts too much to woman. At the same time that she refuses to be governed, if she suffers by her obstinacy, she will accuse the man that shall leave her to herself.'

> Thus they in mutual accusation spent
> The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning;
> And of their vain contest appear'd no end.

This, to the modern, will appear but a very faint piece of conjugal enmity: but you are to consider, that they were but just begun to be angry, and they wanted new words for expressing their new passions. . . . The passionate and familiar terms, with which the same case repeated daily for so many thousand years has furnished the present generation, were not then in use; but the foundation of debate has ever been the same, a contention about their merit and wisdom. Our general mother was a beauty; and hearing there was another now in the world, could not forbear, as Adam tells her, showing herself, though to the devil, by whom the same vanity made her liable to be betrayed.

I cannot, with all the help of science and astrology, find any other remedy for this evil, but what was the medicine in this first quarrel, which was, as appears

in the next book, that they were convinced of their being both weak, but the one weaker than the other.

If it were possible that the beauteous could but rage a little before a glass, and see their pretty countenances grow wild, it is not to be doubted but it would have a very good effect: but that would require temper; for Lady Firebrand, upon observing her features swell when her maid vexed her the other day, stamped her dressing-glass under her feet. In this case, when one of this temper is moved, she is like a witch in an operation, and makes all things turn round with her. The very fabric is in a vertigo when she begins to charm. In an instant, whatever was the occasion that moved her blood, she has such intolerable servants, Betty is so awkward, Tom cannot carry a message, and her husband has so little respect for her, that she, poor woman, is weary of this life, and was born to be unhappy.

[*Tatler*, No. 217.

The Billingsgate Fishwife and Forms of Address

MANY are the inconveniences which happen from the improper manner of address in common speech, between persons of the same or of different quality. Among these errors, there is none greater than that of the impertinent use of title, and a paraphrastical way of saying, You. I had the curiosity the other day to follow a crowd of people near Billingsgate, who were conducting a passionate woman that sold fish to a magistrate, in order to explain some words, which were ill taken by one of her own quality and profession in the public market. When she came to make her defence, she was so full of, 'His Worship,' and of, 'If it should please his Honour,' that we could, for some time, hardly hear any other apology she made for herself, than that of atoning for the ill language she had been accused of towards her neighbour, by the great civilities she paid to her judge. But this extravagance in her sense of doing honour was no more to be wondered at, than that her many rings on each finger were worn as instances of finery and dress. The vulgar may thus heap and huddle terms of respect, and nothing better be expected from them; but for people of rank to repeat appellatives insignificantly, is

a folly not to be endured, neither with regard to our time, or our understanding. It is below the dignity of speech to extend it with more words or phrases than are necessary to explain ourselves with elegance: and it is, methinks, an instance of ignorance, if not of servitude, to be redundant in such expressions.

I waited upon a man of quality some mornings ago. He happened to be dressing; and his shoemaker fitting him, told him, 'that if his Lordship would please to tread hard, or that if his Lordship would stamp a little, his Lordship would find his Lordship's shoe will sit as easy as any piece of work his Lordship should see in England.' As soon as my lord was dressed, a gentleman approached him with a very good air, and told him, 'he had an affair which had long depended in the lower courts; which, through the inadvertency of his ancestors on the one side, and the ill arts of their adversaries on the other, could not possibly be settled according to the rules of the lower courts; that, therefore, he designed to bring his cause before the House of Lords next session, where he should be glad if his Lordship should happen to be present; for he doubted not but his cause would be approved by all men of justice and honour.' In this place the word Lordship was gracefully inserted; because it was applied to him in that circumstance wherein his quality was the occasion of the discourse, and wherein it was most useful to the one, and most honourable to the other.

This way is so far from being disrespectful to the honour of nobles, that it is an expedient for using them with greater deference. I would not put Lordship to a man's hat, gloves, wig, or cane; but to desire his

Lordship's favour, his Lordship's judgment, or his Lordship's patronage, is a manner of speaking which expresses an alliance between his quality and his merit. It is this knowledge, which distinguished the discourse of the shoemaker from that of the gentleman. The highest point of good-breeding, if any one can hit it, is to show a very nice regard to your own dignity, and, with that in your heart, express your value for the man above you.

But the silly humour to the contrary has so much prevailed, that the slavish addition of title enervates discourse, and renders the application of it almost ridiculous. We writers of diurnals are nearer in our style to that of common talk than any other writers, by which means we use words of respect sometimes very unfortunately. The *Postman*, who is one of the most celebrated of our fraternity, fell into this misfortune yesterday in his paragraph from Berlin of the twenty-sixth of July. 'Count Wartembourg,' says he 'great chamberlain, and chief minister of this court, who on Monday last accompanied the King of Prussia to Oranienburg, was taken so very ill, that on Wednesday his life was despaired of; and we had a report that his Excellency was dead.'

I humbly presume that it flattens the narration, to say 'his Excellency' in a case which is common to all men; except you would infer what is not to be inferred, to wit, that the author designed to say, 'all wherein he excelled others was departed from him.'

Were distinctions used according to the rules of reason and sense, those additions to men's names would be, as they were first intended, significant of their worth, and not their persons; so that in some

cases it might be proper to say, 'The man is dead; but his Excellency will never die.' It is, methinks, very unjust to laugh at a Quaker, because he has taken up a resolution to treat you with a word, the most expressive of complaisance that can be thought of, and with an air of good-nature and charity calls you Friend. I say, it is very unjust to rally him for this term to a stranger, when you yourself, in all your phrases of distinction, confound phrases of honour into no use at all.

Tom Courtly, who is the pink of courtesy, is an instance of how little moment an undistinguishing application of sounds of honour are to those who understand themselves. Tom never fails of paying his obeisance to every man he sees, who has title or office to make him conspicuous; but his deference is wholly given to outward considerations. I, who know him, can tell him within half an acre, how much land one man has more than another by Tom's bow to him. Title is all he knows of honour, and civility of friendship: for this reason, because he cares for no man living, he is religiously strict in performing, what he calls, his respects to you. To this end he is very learned in pedigree; and will abate something in the ceremony of his approaches to a man, if he is in any doubt about the bearing of his coat-of-arms. What is the most pleásant of all his character is, that he acts with a sort of integrity in these impertinences; and though he would not do any solid kindness, he is wonderfully just and careful not to wrong his quality. But as integrity is very scarce in the world, I cannot forbear having respect for the impertinent: it is some virtue to be bound by anything. Tom and I are upon

very good terms, for the respect he has for the house of Bickerstaff. Though one cannot but laugh at his serious consideration of things so little essential, one must have a value even for a frivolous good conscience.

[*Tatler*, No. 204.

The Story of Mr. Anthony Freeman

Part I

'Mr. Spectator,

'I never look upon my dear wife, but I think of the happiness Sir Roger de Coverley enjoys, in having such a friend as you to expose in proper colours the cruelty and perverseness of his mistress. I have very often wished you visited in our family, and were acquainted with my spouse; she would afford you for some months at least matter enough for one *Spectator* a week. Since we are not so happy as to be of your acquaintance, give me leave to represent to you our present circumstances as well as I can in writing. You are to know then that I am not of a very different constitution from Nathaniel Henroost, whom you have lately recorded in your speculations; and have a wife who makes a more tyrannical use of the knowledge of my easy temper than that lady ever pretended to. We had not been a month married, when she found in me a certain pain to give offence, and an indolence that made me bear little inconveniences rather than dispute about them. From this observation it soon came to that pass, that if I offered to go abroad, she would get between me and the door, kiss me, and say she could not part with me; and

then down again I sat. In a day or two after this first pleasant step towards confining me, she declared to me, "that I was all the world to her, and she thought she ought to be all the world to me. If," she said, "my dear loves me as much as I love him, he will never be tired of my company." This declaration was followed by my being denied to all my acquaintance; and it very soon came to that pass, that to give an answer at the door before my face, the servants would ask her whether I was within or not; and she would answer no with great fondness, and tell me I was a good dear. I will not enumerate more little circumstances to give you a livelier sense of my condition; but tell you in general, that from such steps as these at first, I now live the life of a prisoner of state; my letters are opened, and I have not the use of pen, ink, and paper, but in her presence. I never go abroad, except she sometimes takes me with her in her coach to take the air, if it may be called so, when we drive, as we generally do, with the glasses up. I have overheard my servants lament my condition, but they dare not bring me messages without her knowledge, because they doubt my resolution to stand by them. In the midst of this insipid way of life, an old acquaintance of mine, Tom Meggot, who is a favourite with her, and allowed to visit me in her company because he sings prettily, has roused me to rebel, and conveyed his intelligence to me in the following manner. My wife is a great pretender to music, and very ignorant of it; but far gone in the Italian taste. Tom goes to Armstrong, the famous fine writer of music, and desires him to put this sentence of Tully in the scale of an Italian air, and write it out for my spouse from him.

An ille mihi liber cui mulier imperat? Cui leges imponit, præscribit, jubet, vetat quod videtur? Qui nihil imperanti negare, nihil recusare audet? Poscit? dandum est. Vocat? veniendum. Ejicit? abeundum. Minitatur? extimiscendum. Does he live like a gentleman who is commanded by a woman? He to whom she gives law, grants and denies what she pleases? who can neither deny her anything she asks, or refuse to do anything she commands?

'To be short, my wife was extremely pleased with it; said the Italian was the only language for music; and admired how wonderfully tender the sentiment was, and how pretty the accent is of that language, with the rest that is said by rote on that occasion. Mr. Meggot is sent for to sing this air, which he performs with mighty applause; and my wife is in ecstasy on the occasion, and glad to find, by my being so much pleased, that I was at last come into the notion of the Italian; "for," said she, "it grows upon one when one once comes to know a little of the language; and pray, Mr. Meggot, sing again those notes, *Nihil imperanti negare, nihil recusare.*" You may believe I was not a little delighted with my friend Tom's expedient to alarm me, and in obedience to his summons I give all this story thus at large; and I am resolved, when this appears in the *Spectator*, to declare for myself. The manner of the insurrection I contrive by your means, which shall be no other than that Tom Meggot, who is at our tea-table every morning, shall read it to us; and if my dear can take the hint, and say not one word, but let this be the beginning of a new life without further explanation, it is very well; for as soon as the *Spectator* is read out, I shall, without more ado,

call for the coach, name the hour when I shall be at home, if I come at all; if I do not, they may go to dinner. If my spouse only swells and says nothing, Tom and I go out together, and all is well, as I said before; but if she begins to command or expostulate, you shall in my next to you receive a full account of her resistance and submission, for submit the dear thing must to,

'Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

'ANTHONY FREEMAN.

'*P.S.*—I hope I need not tell you that I desire this may be in your very next.'

[*Spectator*, No. 212.

The Story of Mr. Anthony Freeman

Part II

To Mr. Spectator

'Sir,

'This is to inform you, that Mr. Freeman had no sooner taken coach, but his lady was taken with a terrible fit of the vapours, which, 'tis feared, will endanger her life; therefore, dear sir, if you know of any receipt that is good against this fashionable reigning distemper, be pleased to communicate it for the good of the public, and you will oblige

'Yours,

'A. Noewill.'

'Mr. Spectator,

'The uproar was so great as soon as I had read the *Spectator* concerning Mrs. Freeman, that after many revolutions in her temper, of raging, swooning, railing, fainting, pitying herself, and reviling her husband, upon an accidental coming in of a neighbouring lady (who says she has writ to you also) she had nothing left for it but to fall in a fit. I had

the honour to read the paper to her, and have a pretty good command of my countenance and temper on such occasions; and soon found my historical name to be Tom Meggot in your writings, but concealed myself till I saw how it affected Mrs. Freeman. She looked frequently at her husband, as often at me; and she did not tremble as she filled tea, till she came to the circumstance of Armstrong's writing out a piece of Tully for an opera tune: then she burst out, "she was exposed, she was deceived, she was wronged and abused." The teacup was thrown in the fire; and without taking vengeance on her spouse, she said of me, "that I was a pretending coxcomb, a meddler that knew not what it was to interpose in so nice an affair as between a man and his wife." To which Mr. Freeman: "Madam, were I less fond of you than I am, I should not have taken this way of writing to the *Spectator*, to inform a woman whom God and nature has placed under my direction with what I request of her; but since you are so indiscreet as not to take the hint which I gave you in that paper, I must tell you, madam, in so many words, that you have for a long and tedious space of time acted a part unsuitable to the sense you ought to have of the subordination in which you are placed. And I must acquaint you once for all, that the fellow without, ha Tom! (here the footman entered and answered 'Madam') Sirrah, don't you know my voice; look upon me when I speak to you: I say, madam, this fellow here is to know of me myself, whether I am at leisure to see company or not. I am from this hour master of this house; and my business in it, and everywhere else, is to behave myself in such a manner, as it shall be hereafter an

honour to you to bear my name; and your pride, that you are the delight, the darling, and ornament of a man of honour, useful and esteemed by his friends; and I no longer one that has buried some merit in the world, in compliance to a froward humour which has grown upon an agreeable woman by his indulgence." Mr. Freeman ended this with a tenderness in his aspect and a downcast eye, which showed he was extremely moved at the anguish he saw her in; for she sat swelling with passion, and her eyes firmly fixed on the fire; when I, fearing he would lose all again, took upon me to provoke her out of that amiable sorrow she was in, to fall upon me; upon which I said very seasonably for my friend, "that indeed Mr. Freeman was become the common talk of the town; and that nothing was so much a jest, as when it was said in company, 'Mr. Freeman had promised to come to such a place.'" Upon which the good lady turned her softness into downright rage, and threw the scalding tea-kettle upon your humble servant; flew into the middle of the room, and cried out "she was the unfortunatest of all women: others kept family dissatisfactions for hours of privacy and retirement: no apology was to be made to her, no expedient to be found, no previous manner of breaking what was amiss in her; but all the world was to be acquainted with her errors, without the least admonition." Mr. Freeman was going to make a softening speech, but I interposed: "Look you, madam, I have nothing to say to this matter, but you ought to consider you are now past a chicken; this humour, which was well enough in a girl, is insufferable in one of your motherly character." With that she lost all patience, and flew

directly at her husband's periwig. I got her in my arms and defended my friend: he making signs at the same time that it was too much; I beckoning, nodding, and frowning over her shoulder, that he was lost if he did not persist. In this manner we flew round and round the room in a moment, until the lady I spoke of above, and servants entered; upon which she fell on a couch as breathless. I still kept up my friend; but he, with a very silly air, bid them bring the coach to the door, and we went off, I forced to bid the coachman drive on. We were no sooner come to my lodgings, but all his wife's relations came to inquire after him; and Mrs. Freeman's mother writ a note, wherein she thought never to have seen this day, and so forth.

'In a word, sir, I am afraid we are upon a thing we have no talents for; and I can observe already, my friend looks upon me rather as a man that knows a weakness of him that he is ashamed of, than one who has rescued him from slavery. Mr. Spectator, I am but a young fellow, and if Mr. Freeman submits, I shall be looked upon as an incendiary, and never get a wife as long as I breathe. He has indeed sent word home he shall lie at Hampstead to-night; but I believe fear of the first onset after this rupture has too great a place in this resolution. Mrs. Freeman has a very pretty sister; suppose I delivered him up, and articled with the mother for her for bringing him home. If he has not courage to stand it (you are a great casuist), is it such an ill thing to bring myself off, as well as I can? What makes me doubt my man, is, that I find he thinks it reasonable to expostulate at least with her; and Captain Sentry will tell you, if you

let your orders be disputed, you are no longer a commander. I wish you could advise me how to get clear of this business handsomely.

'Yours,

'TOM MEGGOT.'

[*Spectator*, No. 216.

Raphael's Cartoons

I HAVE very often lamented and hinted my sorrow in several speculations, that the art of painting is made so little use of to the improvement of our manners. When we consider that it places the action of the person represented in the most agreeable aspect imaginable, that it does not only express the passion or concern as it sits upon him who is drawn, but has under those features the height of the painter's imagination. What strong images of virtue and humanity might we not expect would be instilled into the mind from the labours of the pencil? This is a poetry which would be understood with much less capacity, and less expense of time, than what is taught by writings; but the use of it is generally perverted, and that admirable skill prostituted to the basest and most unworthy ends. Who is the better man for beholding the most beautiful Venus, the best-wrought bacchanal, the images of sleeping Cupids, languishing nymphs, or any of the representations of gods, goddesses, demigods, satyrs, Polyphemes, sphinxes, or fauns? But if the virtues and vices, which are sometimes pretended to be represented under such draughts, were given us by the painter in the characters of real life, and the persons of men and women whose actions have rendered them laudable or infamous; we should not see

a good history-piece without receiving an instructive lecture. There needs no other proof of this truth, than the testimony of every reasonable creature who has seen the cartoons in her Majesty's gallery at Hampton Court: these are representations of no less actions than those of our blessed Saviour and His apostles. As I now sit and recollect the warm images which the admirable Raphael has raised, it is impossible even from the faint traces in one's memory of what one has not seen these two years, to be unmoved at the horror and reverence which appear in the whole assembly when the mercenary man fell down dead; at the amazement of the man born blind, when he first receives sight; or at the graceless indignation of the sorcerer, when he is struck blind. The lame, when they first find strength in their feet, stand doubtful of their new vigour. The heavenly apostles appear acting these great things, with a deep sense of the infirmities which they relieve, but no value of themselves who administer to their weakness. They know themselves to be but instruments; and the generous distress they are painted in when divine honours are offered to them, is a representation in the most exquisite degree of the beauty of holiness. When St. Paul is preaching to the Athenians, with what wonderful art are almost all the different tempers of mankind represented in that elegant audience? You see one credulous of all that is said, another wrapt up in deep suspense, another saying there is some reason in what he says, another angry that the apostle destroys a favourite opinion which he is unwilling to give up, another wholly convinced and holding out his hands in rapture; while the generality attend, and wait for

the opinion of those who are of leading characters in the assembly. I will not pretend so much as to mention that chart on which is drawn the appearance of our blessed Lord after His Resurrection. Present authority, late suffering, humility and majesty, despotic command, and divine love, are at once seated in His celestial aspect. The figures of the eleven apostles are all in the same passion of admiration, but discover it differently according to their characters. Peter receives his Master's orders on his knees with an admiration mixed with a more particular attention: the two next with a more open ecstasy, though still constrained by the awe of the Divine Presence: the beloved disciple, whom I take to be the right of the two first figures, has in his countenance wonder drowned in love; and the last personage, whose back is towards the spectators, and his side towards the Presence, one would fancy to be St. Thomas, as abashed by the conscience of his former diffidence; which perplexed concern it is possible Raphael thought too hard a task to draw but by this acknowledgment of the difficulty to describe it.

The whole work is an exercise of the highest piety in the painter; and all the touches of a religious mind are expressed in a manner much more forcible than can possibly be performed by the most moving eloquence. These invaluable pieces are very justly in the hands of the greatest and most pious sovereign in the world; and cannot be the frequent object of every one at their own leisure: but as an engraver is to the painter what a printer is to an author, it is worthy her Majesty's name, that she has encouraged that noble artist, Monsieur Dorigny, to publish these works

of Raphael. We have of this gentleman a piece of the Transfiguration, which, I think, is held a work second to none in the world.

Methinks it would be ridiculous in our people of condition, after their large bounties to foreigners of no name or merit, should they overlook this occasion of having, for a trifling subscription, a work which it is impossible for a man of sense to behold, without being warmed with the noblest sentiments that can be inspired by love, admiration, compassion, contempt of this world, and expectation of a better.

It is certainly the greatest honour we can do our country, to distinguish strangers of merit who apply to us with modesty and diffidence, which generally accompanies merit. No opportunity of this kind ought to be neglected; and a modest behaviour should alarm us to examine whether we do not lose something excellent under that disadvantage in the possessor of that quality. My skill in paintings, where one is not directed by the passion of the pictures, is so inconsiderable, that I am in very great perplexity when I offer to speak of any performances of painters of landscapes, buildings, or single figures. This makes me at a loss how to mention the pieces which Mr. Boul exposes to sale by auction on Wednesday next in Chandos Street: but having heard him commended by those who have bought of him heretofore for great integrity in his dealing, and overheard him himself (though a laudable painter) say, nothing of his own was fit to come into the room with those he had to sell, I feared I should lose an occasion of serving a man of worth, in omitting to speak of his auction. [*Spectator*, No. 226.

Misdirected Education

WHEN I first began to learn to push, this last winter, my master had a great deal of work upon his hands to make me unlearn the postures and motions which I had got, by having in my younger years practised back-sword, with a little eye to the single falchion. Knock down, was the word in the civil wars; and we generally added to this skill the knowledge of the Cornish hug, as well as the grapple, to play with hand and foot. By this means, I was for defending my head when the French gentleman was making a full pass at my bosom; insomuch, that he told me I was fairly killed seven times in one morning, without having done my master any other mischief than one knock on the pate. This was a great misfortune to me; and I believe I may say, without vanity, I am the first who ever pushed so erroneously, and yet conquered the prejudice of education so well, as to make my passes so clear, and recover hand and foot with that agility as I do at this day. The truth of it is, the first rudiments of education are given very indiscreetly by most parents, as much with relation to the more important concerns of the mind, as in the gestures of the body. Whatever children are designed for, and whatever prospects the fortune or interest of their parents may give them in their future lives, they are all promiscuously instructed the same way; and

Horace and Virgil must be thumbed by a boy, as well before he goes to an apprenticeship, as to the university. This ridiculous way of treating the under-aged of this island has very often raised both my spleen and mirth, but I think never both at once so much as to-day. A good mother of our neighbourhood made me a visit with her son and heir; a lad somewhat above five feet, and wants but little of the height and strength of a good musketeer in any regiment in the service. Her business was to desire I would examine him; for he was far gone in a book, the first letters of which she often saw in my papers. The youth produced it, and I found it was my friend Horace. It was very easy to turn to the place the boy was learning in, which was the fifth ode of the first book, to Pyrrha. I read it over aloud, as well because I am always delighted when I turn to the beautiful parts of that author, as also to gain time for considering a little how to keep up the mother's pleasure in her child, which I thought barbarity to interrupt. In the first place I asked him, 'Who this same Pyrrha was?' He answered very readily, 'She was the wife of Pyrrhus, one of Alexander's captains.' I lifted up my hands. The mother curtsies—'Nay,' says she, 'I knew you would stand in admiration—I assure you,' continued she, 'for all he looks so tall, he is but very young. Pray ask him some more; never spare him.' With that I took the liberty to ask him, 'What was the character of this gentlewoman?' He read the three first verses:

Quis multa gracilis te puer in rosa
Perfusus liquidis urget odoribus
Grato, Pyrrha, sub antro?

And very gravely told me, she lived at the sign of The Rose, in a cellar. I took care to be very much astonished at the lad's improvements; but withal advised her, as soon as possible, to take him from school, for he could learn no more there. This very silly dialogue was a lively image of the impertinent method used in breeding boys without genius or spirit to the reading things for which their heads were never framed. But this is the natural effect of a certain vanity in the minds of parents; who are wonderfully delighted with the thought of breeding their children to accomplishments, which they believe nothing, but want of the same care in their own fathers, prevented them from being masters of. Thus it is, that the part of life most fit for improvement is generally employed in a method against the bent of nature; and a lad of such parts as are fit for an occupation, where there can be no calls out of the beaten path, is two or three years of his time wholly taken up in knowing, how well Ovid's mistress became such a dress; how such a nymph for her cruelty was changed into such an animal; and how it is made generous in Æneas to put Turnus to death: gallantries that can no more come within the occurrences of the lives of ordinary men, than they can be relished by their imaginations. However, still the humour goes on from one generation to another; and the pastry-cook here in the lane, the other night, told me, 'he would not yet take away his son from his learning; but has resolved, as soon as he had a little smattering in the Greek, to put him apprentice to a soap-boiler.' These wrong beginnings determine our success in the world: and when our thoughts are originally falsely biassed, their agility

and force do but carry us the further out of our way, in proportion to our speed. But we are half-way our journey, when we have got into the right road. If all our days were usefully employed, and we did not set out impertinently, we should not have so many grotesque professors in all the arts of life; but every man would be in a proper and becoming method of distinguishing or entertaining himself, suitably to what nature designed him. As they go on now, our parents do not only force us upon what is against our talents, but our teachers are also as injudicious in what they put us to learn. I have hardly ever since suffered so much by the charms of any beauty, as I did before I had a sense of passion, for not apprehending that the smile of Lalage was what pleased Horace; and I verily believe, the stripes I suffered about *Digito male pertinaci* has given me that irreconcilable aversion, which I shall carry to my grave, against coquettes.

As for the elegant writer of whom I am talking, his excellences are to be observed as they relate to the different concerns of his life; and he is always to be looked upon as a lover, a courtier, or a man of wit. His admirable Odes have numberless instances of his merit in each of these characters. His Epistles and Satires are full of proper notices for the conduct of life in a court; and what we call good breeding, is most agreeably intermixed with his morality. His addresses to the persons who favoured him, are so inimitably engaging, that Augustus complained of him for so seldom writing to him, and asked him, 'whether he was afraid posterity should read their names together?' Now, for the generality of men to spend much time in such writings is as pleasant a

folly as any he ridicules. Whatever the crowd of scholars may pretend, if their way of life, or their own imaginations, do not lead them to a taste of him, they may read, nay write, fifty volumes upon him, and be just as they were when they began. I remember to have heard a great painter say, 'There are certain faces for certain painters, as well as certain subjects for certain poets.' This is as true in the choice of studies; and no one will ever relish an author thoroughly well, who would not have been fit company for that author, had they lived at the same time. All others are mechanics in learning, and take the sentiments of writers like waiting-servants, who report what passed at their master's table; but debase every thought and expression, for want of the air with which they were uttered.

[*Tatler*, No. 173.

Smiles and Laughter

In order to look into any person's temper, I generally make my first observation upon his laugh, whether he is easily moved, and what are the passages which throw him into that agreeable kind of convulsion. People are never so much unguarded, as when they are pleased: and laughter being a visible symptom of some inward satisfaction, it is then, if ever, we may believe the face. There is, perhaps, no better index to point us to the particularities of the mind than this, which is in itself one of the chief distinctions of our rationality. For, as Milton says:

> Smiles from reason flow,
> To brute denied, and are of love the food.

It may be remarked in general under this head, that the laugh of men of wit is for the most part but a faint constrained kind of half-laugh, as such persons are never without some diffidence about them; but that of fools is the most honest, natural, open laugh in the world.

I have often had thoughts of writing a treatise upon this faculty, wherein I would have laid down rules for the better regulation of it at the theatre. I would

have criticised on the laughs now in vogue, by which our comic writers might the better know how to transport an audience into this pleasing affection. I had set apart a chapter for a dissertation on the talents of some of our modern comedians; and as it was the manner of Plutarch to draw comparisons of his heroes and orators, to set their actions and eloquence in a fairer light; so I would have made the parallel of Penkethman, Norris, and Bullock; and so far shown their different methods of raising mirth, that any one should be able to distinguish whether the jest was the poet's, or the actor's.

As the playhouse affords us the most occasions of observing upon the behaviour of the face, it may be useful, for the direction of those who would be critics this way, to remark, that the virgin ladies usually dispose themselves in the front of the boxes, the young married women compose the second row, while the rear is generally made up of mothers of long standing, undesigning maids, and contented widows. Whoever will cast his eye upon them under this view, during the representation of a play, will find me so far in the right, that a double *entendre* strikes the first row into an affected gravity, or careless indolence, the second will venture at a smile, but the third take the conceit entirely, and express their mirth in a downright laugh.

When I descend to particulars, I find the reserved prude will relapse into a smile at the extravagant freedoms of the coquette; the coquette in her turn laughs at the starchness and awkward affectation of the prude; the man of letters is tickled with the vanity and ignorance of the fop; and the fop confesses his ridicule at the unpoliteness of the pedant.

I fancy we may range the several kinds of laughers under the following heads :—

The Dimplers.
The Smilers.
The Laughers.
The Grinners.
The Horse-laughers.

The dimple is practised to give a grace to the features, and is frequently made a bait to entangle a gazing lover; this was called by the ancients the Chian laugh.

The smile is for the most part confined to the fair sex, and their male retinue. It expresses our satisfaction in a silent sort of approbation, doth not too much disorder the features, and is practised by lovers of the most delicate address. This tender motion of the physiognomy the ancients called the Ionic laugh.

The laugh among us is the common Risus of the ancients.

The grin, by writers of antiquity is called the Syncrusian; and was then, as it is at this time, made use of to display a beautiful set of teeth.

The horse-laugh, or the Sardonic, is made use of with great success in all kinds of disputation. The proficients in this kind, by a well-timed laugh, will baffle the most solid argument. This upon all occasions supplies the want of reason, is always received with great applause in coffee-house disputes; and that side the laugh joins with, is generally observed to gain the better of his antagonist.

The prude hath a wonderful esteem for the Chian

laugh or dimple; she looks upon all the other kinds of laughter as excesses of levity; and is never seen upon the most extravagant jests to disorder her countenance with the ruffle of a smile. Her lips are composed with a primness peculiar to her character, all her modesty seems collected into her face, and she but very rarely takes the freedom to sink her cheek into a dimple.

The young widow is only a Chian for a time; her smiles are confined by decorum, and she is obliged to make her face sympathise with her habit: she looks demure by art, and by the strictest rules of decency is never allowed the smile till the first offer or advance towards her is over.

The effeminate fop, who by the long exercise of his countenance at the glass, hath reduced it to an exact discipline, may claim a place in this clan. You see him upon any occasion, to give spirit to his discourse, admire his own eloquence by a dimple.

The Ionics are those ladies that take a greater liberty with their features; yet even these may be said to smother a laugh, as the former to stifle a smile.

The beau is an Ionic out of complaisance, and practises the smile the better to sympathise with the fair. He will sometimes join in a laugh to humour the spleen of a lady, or applaud a piece of wit of his own, but always takes care to confine his mouth within the rules of good breeding; he takes the laugh from the ladies, but is never guilty of so great an indecorum as to begin it.

The Ionic laugh is of universal use to men of power at their levees; and is esteemed by judicious place-hunters a more particular mark of distinction than the

whisper. A young gentleman of my acquaintance valued himself upon his success, having obtained this favour after the attendance of three months only.

A judicious author some years since published a collection of sonnets, which he very successfully called *Laugh and be fat; or, Pills to purge Melancholy.* I cannot sufficiently admire the facetious title of these volumes, and must censure the world of ingratitude, while they are so negligent in rewarding the jocose labours of my friend Mr. D'Urfey, who was so large a contributor to this treatise, and to whose humorous production so many rural squires in the remotest parts of this island are obliged for the dignity and state which corpulency gives them. The story of the sick man's breaking an imposthume by a sudden fit of laughter, is too well known to need a recital. It is my opinion, that the above pills would be extremely proper to be taken with asses' milk, and mightily contribute towards the renewing and restoring decayed lungs. Democritus is generally represented to us as a man of the largest size, which we may attribute to his frequent exercise of his risible faculty. I remember Juvenal says of him :

> Perpetuo risu pulmonem agitare solebat.—Sat. x. 33.
> He shook his sides with a perpetual laugh.

That sort of man whom a late writer has called the Butt is a great promoter of this healthful agitation, and is generally stocked with so much good-humour, as to strike in with the gaiety of conversation, though some innocent blunder of his own be the subject of the raillery.

I shall range all old amorous dotards under the

denomination of Grinners; when a young blooming wench touches their fancy, by an endeavour to recall youth into their cheeks, they immediately overstrain their muscular features, and shrivel their countenance into this frightful merriment.

The wag is of the same kind, and by the same artifice labours to support his impotence of wit; but he very frequently calls in the horse-laugh to his assistance.

There are another kind of grinners, which the ancients call Megarics; and some moderns have, not injudiciously, given them the name of the Sneerers. These always indulge their merit at the expense of their friends, and all their ridicule consists in unseasonable ill-nature. I could wish these laughers would consider, that let them do what they can, there is no laughing away their own follies by laughing at other people's.

The mirth of the tea-table is for the most part Megaric; and in visits the ladies themselves very seldom scruple the sacrificing a friendship to a laugh of this denomination.

The coquette hath a great deal of the Megaric in her; but, in short, she is a proficient in laughter, and can run through the whole exercise of the features; she subdues the formal lover with the dimple, accosts the fop with a smile, joins with the wit in the downright laugh; to vary the air of her countenance frequently raillies with the grin; and when she has ridiculed her lover quite out of his understanding, to complete his misfortunes, strikes him dumb with the horse-laugh.

The horse-laugh is a distinguishing characteristic

of the rural hoyden, and it is observed to be the last symptom of rusticity that forsakes her under the discipline of the boarding-school.

Punsters, I find, very much contribute towards the Sardonic, and the extremes of either wit or folly seldom fail of raising this noisy kind of applause. As the ancient physicians held the Sardonic laugh very beneficial to the lungs, I should, methinks, advise all my countrymen of consumptive and hectical constitutions to associate with the most facetious punsters of the age. Persius hath very elegantly described a Sardonic laughter in the following line :—

Ingeminat tremulos naso crispante cachinnos.—Sat. iii. 87.

Redoubled peals of trembling laughter burst,
Convulsing every feature of the face.

Laughter is a vent of any sudden joy that strikes upon the mind, which being too volatile and strong, breaks out in this tremor of the voice. The poets make use of this metaphor when they would describe nature in her richest dress, for beauty is never so lovely as when adorned with the smile, and conversation never sits easier upon us, than when we now and then discharge ourselves in a symphony of laughter, which may not improperly be called, The Chorus of Conversation.

[*Guardian*, No. 29.

Good-humour

A MAN advanced in years that thinks fit to look back upon his former life, and call that only life which was passed with satisfaction and enjoyment, excluding all parts which were not pleasant to him, will find himself very young, if not in his infancy. Sickness, ill-humour and idleness will have robbed him of a great share of that space we ordinarily call our life. It is therefore the duty of every man that would be true to himself, to obtain, if possible, a disposition to be pleased, and place himself in a constant aptitude for the satisfactions of his being. Instead of this, you hardly see a man who is not uneasy in proportion to his advancement in the arts of life. An affected delicacy is the common improvement we meet with in those who pretend to be refined above others. They do not aim at true pleasures themselves, but turn their thoughts upon observing the false pleasures of other men. Such people are valetudinarians in society, and they should no more come into company than a sick man should come into the air. If a man is too weak to bear what is a refreshment to men in health, he must still keep his chamber. When any one in Sir Roger's company complains he is out of order, he immediately calls for some posset-drink for him; for which reason that sort of people who are ever bewailing

their constitution in other places, are the cheerfullest imaginable when he is present.

It is a wonderful thing that so many, and they not reckoned absurd, shall entertain those with whom they converse, by giving them the history of their pains and aches, and imagine such narrations their quota of the conversation. This is of all other the meanest help to discourse, and a man must not think at all, or think himself very insignificant, when he finds an account of his headache answered by another's asking what news in the last mail? Mutual good-humour is a dress we ought to appear in whenever we meet, and we should make no mention of what concerns ourselves, without it be of matters wherein our friends ought to rejoice; but indeed there are crowds of people who put themselves in no method of pleasing themselves or others; such are those whom we usually call indolent persons. Indolence is, methinks, an intermediate state between pleasure and pain, and very much unbecoming any part of our life after we are out of the nurse's arms. Such an aversion to labour creates a constant weariness, and one would think should make existence itself a burden. The indolent man descends from the dignity of his nature, and makes that being which was rational merely vegetative. His life consists only in the mere increase and decay of a body, which, with relation to the rest of the world, might as well have been uninformed, as the habitation of a reasonable mind.

Of this kind is the life of that extraordinary couple, Harry Tersett and his lady. Harry was, in the days of his celibacy, one of those pert creatures who have much vivacity and little understanding; Mrs. Rebecca

Quickly, whom he married, had all that the fire of youth and a lively manner could do towards making an agreeable woman. These two people of seeming merit fell into each other's arms; and, passion being sated, and no reason or good sense in either to succeed it, their life is now at a stand; their meals are insipid and their time tedious; their fortune has placed them above care, and their loss of taste reduced them below diversion. When we talk of these as instances of inexistence, we do not mean, that in order to live, it is necessary we should be always in jovial crews, or crowned with chaplets of roses, as the merry fellows among the ancients are described; but it is intended, by considering these contraries to pleasure, indolence, and too much delicacy, to show that it is prudence to preserve a disposition in ourselves to receive a certain delight in all we hear and see.

This portable quality of good-humour seasons all the parts and occurrences we meet with in such a manner, that there are no moments lost: but they all pass with so much satisfaction, that the heaviest of loads (when it is a load), that of time, is never felt by us. Varilas has this quality to the highest perfection, and communicates it wherever he appears. The sad, the merry, the severe, the melancholy, show a new cheerfulness when he comes amongst them. At the same time no one can repeat anything that Varilas has ever said that deserves repetition; but the man has that innate goodness of temper, that he is welcome to everybody, because every man thinks he is so to him. He does not seem to contribute anything to the mirth of the company; and yet upon reflection you find it all happened by his being there. I thought it

was whimsically said of a gentleman, that if Varilas had wit, it would be the best wit in the world. It is certain, when a well-corrected lively imagination and good breeding are added to a sweet disposition, they qualify it to be one of the greatest blessings as well as pleasures of life.

Men would come into company with ten times the pleasure they do, if they were sure of hearing nothing which should shock them, as well as expected what would please them. When we know every person that is spoken of is represented by one who has no ill-will, and everything that is mentioned described by one that is apt to set it in the best light, the entertainment must be delicate, because the cook has nothing brought to his hand but what is the most excellent in its kind. Beautiful pictures are the entertainments of pure minds, and deformities of the corrupted. It is a degree towards the life of angels, when we enjoy conversation wherein there is nothing presented but in its excellence; and a degree towards that of demons, wherein nothing is shown but in its degeneracy.

[*Spectator*, No. 100.

The Art of Conversation

It is no easy matter, when people are advancing in anything, to prevent their going too fast for want of patience. This happens in nothing more frequently than in the prosecution of studies. Hence it is, that we meet crowds who attempt to be eloquent before they can speak. They affect the flowers of rhetoric before they understand the parts of speech. In the ordinary conversation of this town, there are so many who can, as they call it, talk well, that there is not one in twenty that talks to be understood. This proceeds from an ambition to excel, or, as the term is, to shine in company. The matter is not to make themselves understood, but admired. They come together with a certain emulation, rather than benevolence. When you fall among such companions, the safe way is to give yourself up, and let the orators declaim for your esteem, and trouble yourself no further. It is said, that a poet must be born so; but I think it may be much better said of an orator, especially when we talk of our town poets and orators: but the town poets are full of rules and laws; the town orators go through thick and thin, and are, forsooth, persons of such eminent natural parts, and knowledge of the world, that they despise all men as unexperienced scholastics, who wait for an occasion before they speak, or who

speak no more than is necessary. They had half persuaded me to go to the tavern the other night, but that a gentleman whispered me, 'Pr'ythee, Isaac, go with us; there is Tom Varnish will be there, and he is a fellow that talks as well as any man in England.'

I must confess, when a man expresses himself well upon any occasion, and his falling into an account of any subject arises from a desire to oblige the company, or from fulness of the circumstance itself, so that his speaking of it at large is occasioned only by the openness of a companion; I say, in such a case as this, it is not only pardonable, but agreeable, when a man takes the discourse to himself; but when you see a fellow watch for opportunities for being copious, it is excessively troublesome. A man that stammers, if he has understanding, is to be attended to with patience and good-nature; but he that speaks more than he needs, has no right to such an indulgence. The man who has a defect in his speech takes pains to come to you, while a man of weak capacity, with fluency of speech, triumphs in outrunning you. The stammerer strives to be fit for your company; the loquacious man endeavours to show you, you are not fit for his.

With thoughts of this kind do I always enter into that man's company who is recommended as a person that talks well; but if I were to choose the people with whom I would spend my hours of conversation, they should be certainly such as laboured no further than to make themselves readily and clearly apprehended, and would have patience and curiosity to understand me. To have good sense, and ability to express it, are the most essential and necessary qualities in companions. When thoughts rise in us fit to utter, among

familiar friends there needs but very little care in clothing them.

Urbanus is, I take it, a man one might live with whole years, and enjoy all the freedom and improvement imaginable, and yet be insensible of a contradiction to you in all the mistakes you can be guilty of. His great goodwill to his friends, has produced in him such a general deference in his discourse, that if he differs from you in his sense of anything, he introduces his own thoughts by some agreeable circumlocution; or, 'he has often observed such and such a circumstance that made him of another opinion.' Again, where another would be apt to say, 'This I am confident of, I may pretend to judge of this matter as well as anybody'; Urbanus says, 'I am verily persuaded; I believe one may conclude.' In a word, there is no man more clear in his thoughts and expressions than he is, or speaks with greater diffidence. You shall hardly find one man of any consideration, but you shall observe one of less consequence form himself after him. This happens to Urbanus; but the man who steals from him almost every sentiment he utters in a whole week, disguises the theft by carrying it with a quite different air. Umbratilis knows Urbanus's doubtful way of speaking proceeds from good nature and good breeding, and not from uncertainty in his opinions. Umbratilis, therefore, has no more to do but repeat the thoughts of Urbanus in a positive manner, and appear to the undiscerning a wiser man than the person from whom he borrows: but those who know him, can see the servant in his master's habit; and the more he struts, the less do his clothes appear his own.

In conversation, the medium is neither to affect silence or eloquence; not to value our approbation, and to endeavour to excel us who are of your company, are equal injuries. The great enemies therefore to good company, and those who transgress most against the laws of equality, which is the life of it, are, the clown, the wit, and the pedant. A clown, when he has sense, is conscious of his want of education, and with an awkward bluntness, hopes to keep himself in countenance by overthrowing the use of all polite behaviour. He takes advantage of the restraint good breeding lays upon others not to offend him, to trespass against them, and is under the man's own shelter while he intrudes upon him. The fellows of this class are very frequent in the repetition of the words *rough* and *manly*. When these people happen to be by their fortunes of the rank of gentlemen, they defend their other absurdities by an impertinent courage; and, to help out the defect of their behaviour, add their being dangerous to their being disagreeable. This gentleman (though he displeases, professes to do so; and knowing that, dares still go on to do so) is not so painful a companion, as he who will please you against your will, and resolves to be a wit.

This man, upon all occasions, and whoever he falls in company with, talks in the same circle, and in the same round of chat which he has learned at one of the tables of this coffee-house. As poetry is in itself an elevation above ordinary and common sentiments; so there is no fop so very near a madman in indifferent company as a poetical one. He is not apprehensive that the generality of the world are intent upon the business of their own fortune and profession, and have

as little capacity as curiosity to enter into matters of ornament or speculation. I remember at a full table in the city, one of these ubiquitary wits was entertaining the company with a soliloquy, for so I call it when a man talks to those who do not understand him, concerning wit and humour. An honest gentleman who sat next to me, and was worth half a plum, stared at him, and observing there was some sense, as he thought, mixed with his impertinence, whispered me, 'Take my word for it, this fellow is more knave than fool.' This was all my good friend's applause of the wittiest man of talk that I was ever present at, which wanted nothing to make it excellent, but that there was no occasion for it.

The pedant is so obvious to ridicule, that it would be to be one to offer to explain him. He is a gentleman so well known, that there is none but those of his own class who do not laugh at and avoid him. Pedantry proceeds from much reading and little understanding. A pedant among men of learning and sense, is like an ignorant servant giving an account of a polite conversation. You may find he has brought with him more than could have entered into his head without being there, but still that he is not a bit wiser than if he had not been there at all.

[*Tatler*, No. 244.

Noble Independence

It is necessary to an easy and happy life, to possess our minds in such a manner as to be always well satisfied with our own reflections. The way to this state is to measure our actions by our own opinion, and not by that of the rest of the world. The sense of other men ought to prevail over us in things of less consideration, but not in concerns where truth and honour are engaged. When we look into the bottom of things, what at first appears a paradox is a plain truth; and those professions, which, for want of being duly weighed, seem to proceed from a sort of romantic philosophy, and ignorance of the world, after a little reflection, are so reasonable, that it is direct madness to walk by any other rules. Thus to contradict our desires, and to conquer the impulses of our ambition, if they do not fall in with what we in our inward sentiments approve, is so much our interest, and so absolutely necessary to our real happiness, that to contemn all the wealth and power in the world, where they stand in competition with a man's honour, is rather good sense than greatness of mind.

Did we consider that the mind of a man is the man

himself, we should think it the most unnatural sort of self-murder to sacrifice the sentiment of the soul to gratify the appetites of the body. Bless us! is it possible, that when the necessities of life are supplied, a man would flatter to be rich, or circumvent to be powerful! When we meet a poor wretch, urged with hunger and cold, asking an alms, we are apt to think this a state we could rather starve than submit to: but yet how much more despicable is his condition, who is above necessity, and yet shall resign his reason and his integrity to purchase superfluities! Both these are abject and common beggars; but sure it is less despicable to beg a supply to a man's hunger than his vanity. But custom and general prepossessions have so far prevailed over an unthinking world, that those necessitous creatures, who cannot relish life without applause, attendance, and equipage, are so far from making a contemptible figure, that distressed virtue is less esteemed than successful vice. But if a man's appeal, in cases that regard his honour, were made to his own soul, there would be a basis and standing rule for our conduct, and we should always endeavour rather to be, than appear honourable. Mr. Collier in his *Essay on Fortitude*, has treated this subject with great wit and magnanimity. 'What,' says he, 'can be more honourable than to have courage enough to execute the commands of reason and conscience; to maintain the dignity of our nature, and the station assigned us? to be proof against poverty, pain, and death itself? I mean so far as not to do anything that is scandalous or sinful to avoid them. To stand adversity under all shapes with decency and resolution;—to do this, is to be great above title and fortune. This argues the

soul of a heavenly extraction, and is worthy the offspring of the Deity.'

What a generous ambition has this man pointed to us! When men have settled in themselves a conviction, by such noble precepts, that there is nothing honourable which is not accompanied with innocence; nothing mean but what has guilt in it: I say, when they have attained thus much, though poverty, pain, and death may still retain their terrors, yet riches, pleasures, and honours will easily lose their charms, if they stand between us and our integrity.

What is here said with allusion to fortune and fame, may as justly be applied to wit and beauty; for these latter are as adventitious as the other, and as little concern the essence of the soul. They are all laudable in the man who possesses them, only for the just application of them. A bright imagination, while it is subservient to an honest and noble soul, is a faculty which makes a man justly admired by mankind, and furnishes him with reflections upon his own actions, which add delicates to the feast of a good conscience: but when wit descends to wait upon sensual pleasures or promote the base purposes of ambition, it is then to be contemned in proportion to its excellence. If a man will not resolve to place the foundation of his happiness in his own mind, life is a bewildered and unhappy state, incapable of rest or tranquillity. For to such a one, the general applause of valour, wit, nay of honesty itself, can give him but a very feeble comfort; since it is capable of being interrupted by any one who wants either understanding or good-nature to see or acknowledge such excellences. This rule is so necessary, that one may very safely say, it

is impossible to know any true relish of our being without it. Look about you in common life among the ordinary race of mankind, and you will find merit in every kind is allowed only to those who are in particular districts or sets of company; but, since men can have little pleasure in these faculties which denominate them persons of distinction, let them give up such an empty pursuit, and think nothing essential to happiness but what is in their own power; the capacity of reflecting with pleasure on their own actions, however they are interpreted.

It is so evident a truth, that it is only in our own bosoms we are to search for anything to make us happy, that it is, methinks, a disgrace to our nature to talk of taking our measures from thence only, as a matter of fortitude. When all is well there, the vicissitudes and distinctions of life are the mere scenes of a drama; and he will never act his part well, who has his thoughts more fixed upon the applause of the audience than the design of his part.

The life of a man who acts with a steady integrity, without valuing the interpretation of his actions, has but one uniform regular path to move in, where he cannot meet opposition, or fear ambuscade. On the other side, the least deviation from the rules of honour introduces a train of numberless evils, and involves him in inexplicable mazes. He that has entered into guilt has bid adieu to rest; and every criminal has his share of the misery expressed so emphatically in the tragedian,

Macbeth shall sleep no more!

It was with detestation of any other grandeur but

the calm command of his own passions, that the excellent Mr. Cowley cries out with so much justice:

> If e'er ambition did my fancy cheat
> With any thought so mean as to be great,
> Continue, heaven, still from me to remove
> The humble blessings of that life I love!

[*Tatler*, No. 251.

Disappointed Ambition

THIS afternoon I went to visit a gentleman of my acquaintance at Mile End; and passing through Stepney churchyard, I could not forbear entertaining myself with the inscriptions on the tombs and graves. Among others, I observed one with this notable memorial:

Here lies the body of T. B.

This fantastical desire of being remembered only by the two first letters of a name, led me into the contemplation of the vanity and imperfect attainments of ambition in general. When I run back in my imagination all the men whom I have ever known and conversed with in my whole life, there are but very few who have not used their faculties in the pursuit of what it is impossible to acquire; or left the possession of what they might have been, at their setting out, masters, to search for it where it was out of their reach. In this thought it was not possible to forget the instance of Pyrrhus, who proposing to himself in discourse with a philosopher, one, and another, and another conquest, was asked, what he would do after all that? 'Then,' says the king, 'we will make merry.' He was well answered, 'What hinders your doing that in the condition you are already?' The restless

desire of exerting themselves above the common level of mankind is not to be resisted in some tempers; and minds of this make may be observed in every condition of life. Where such men do not make to themselves, or meet with employment, the soil of their constitution runs into tares and weeds. An old friend of mine, who lost a major's post forty years ago, and quitted, has ever since studied maps, encampments, retreats, and countermarches; with no other design but to feed his spleen and ill-humour, and furnish himself with matter for arguing against all the successful actions of others. He that, at his first setting out in the world, was the gayest man in our regiment; ventured his life with alacrity, and enjoyed it with satisfaction; encouraged men below him, and was courted by men above him, has been ever since the most froward creature breathing. His warm complexion spends itself now only in a general spirit of contradiction: for which he watches all occasions, and is in his conversation still upon sentry, treats all men like enemies, with every other impertinence of a speculative warrior.

He that observes in himself this natural inquietude, should take all imaginable care to put his mind in some method of gratification; or he will soon find himself grow into the condition of this disappointed major. Instead of courting proper occasions to rise above others, he will be ever studious of pulling others down to him: it being the common refuge of disappointed ambition, to ease themselves by detraction. It would be no great argument against ambition, that there are such *mortal* things in the disappointment of it; but it certainly is a forcible exception, that there

can be no solid happiness in the success of it. If we value popular praise, it is in the power of the meanest of the people to disturb us by calumny; if the fame of being happy, we cannot look into a village, but we see crowds in actual possession of what we seek only the appearance. To this may be added, that there is I know not what malignity in the minds of ordinary men, to oppose you in what they see you fond of; and it is a certain exception against a man's receiving applause, that he visibly courts it. However, this is not only the passion of great and undertaking spirits; but you see it in the lives of such as, one would believe, were far enough removed from the ways of ambition. The rural esquires of this nation even eat and drink out of vanity. A vainglorious fox-hunter shall entertain half a county, for the ostentation of his beef and beer, without the least affection for any of the crowd about him. He feeds them, because he thinks it a superiority over them that he does so; and they devour him, because they know he treats them out of insolence. This indeed is ambition in grotesque; but may figure to us the condition of politer men, whose only pursuit is glory. When the superior acts out of a principle of vanity, the dependant will be sure to allow it him; because he knows it destructive of the very applause which is courted by the man who favours him, and consequently makes him nearer himself.

But as every man living has more or less of this incentive, which makes men impatient of an inactive condition, and urges men to attempt what may tend to their reputation, it is absolutely necessary they should form to themselves an ambition, which is in

every man's power to gratify. This ambition would be independent, and would consist only in acting what, to a man's own mind, appears most great and laudable. It is a pursuit in the power of every man, and is only a regular prosecution of what he himself approves. It is what can be interrupted by no outward accidents; for no man can be robbed of his good intention. One of our society of the Trumpet therefore started last night a notion, which I thought had reason in it. 'It is, methinks,' said he, 'an unreasonable thing, that heroic virtue should, as it seems to be at present, be confined to a certain order of men, and be attainable by none but those whom fortune has elevated to the most conspicuous stations. I would have everything to be esteemed as heroic, which is great and uncommon in the circumstances of the man who performs it.' Thus there would be no virtue in human life, which every one of the species would not have a pretence to arrive at, and an ardency to exert. Since fortune is not in our power, let us be as little as possible in hers. Why should it be necessary that a man should be rich, to be generous? If we measured by the quality and not the quantity of things, the particulars which accompany an action is what should denominate it mean or great. The highest station of human life is to be attained by each man that pretends to it: for every man can be as valiant, as generous, as wise, and as merciful, as the faculties and opportunities which he has from heaven and fortune will permit. He that can say to himself, 'I do as much good, and am as virtuous as my most earnest endeavours will allow me,' whatever is his station in the world, is to see himself possessed of the highest honour. If ambition is not thus turned,

it is no other than a continual succession of anxiety and vexation. But when it has this cast, it invigorates the mind; and the consciousness of its own worth is a reward, which is not in the power of envy, reproach, or detraction, to take from it. Thus the seat of solid honour is in a man's own bosom; and no one can want support who is in possession of an honest conscience, but he who would suffer the reproaches of it for other greatness.

[*Tatler*, No. 202.

On Judicious Flattery

An old acquaintance, who met me this morning, seemed overjoyed to see me, and told me I looked as well as he had known me do these forty years: 'but,' continued he, 'not quite the man you were, when we visited together at Lady Brightly's. Oh! Isaac, those days are over. Do you think there are any such fine creatures now living, as we then conversed with?' He went on with a thousand incoherent circumstances, which, in his imagination, must needs please me; but they had quite the contrary effect. The flattery with which he began, in telling me how well I wore, was not disagreeable; but his indiscreet mention of a set of acquaintance we had outlived, recalled ten thousand things to my memory, which made me reflect upon my present condition with regret. Had he indeed been so kind as, after a long absence, to felicitate me upon an indolent and easy old age; and mentioned how much he and I had to thank for, who at our time of day could walk firmly, eat heartily, and converse cheerfully, he had kept up my pleasure in myself. But of all mankind, there are none so shocking as these injudicious civil people. They ordinarily begin upon something that they know must be a satisfaction; but then, for fear of the imputation of flattery, they

follow it with the last thing in the world of which you would be reminded. It is this that perplexes civil persons. The reason that there is such a general outcry among us against flatterers is, that there are so very few good ones. It is the nicest art in this life, and is a part of eloquence which does not want the preparation that is necessary to all other parts of it, that your audience should be your well-wishers; for praise from an enemy is the most pleasing of all commendations.

It is generally to be observed, that the person most agreeable to a man for a constancy is he that has no shining qualities, but is a certain degree above great imperfections; whom he can live with as his inferior, and who will either overlook, or not observe his little defects. Such an easy companion as this either now and then throws out a little flattery, or lets a man silently flatter himself in his superiority to him. If you take notice, there is hardly a rich man in the world, who has not such a led friend of small consideration, who is a darling for his insignificancy. It is a great ease to have one in our own shape a species below us, and who, without being listed in our service, is by nature of our retinue. These dependants are of excellent use on a rainy day, or when a man has not a mind to dress; or to exclude solitude, when one has neither a mind to that or to company. There are of this good-natured order, who are so kind as to divide themselves, and do these good offices to many. Five or six of them visit a whole quarter of the town, and exclude the spleen, without fees, from the families they frequent. If they do not prescribe physic, they can be company when you take it. Very great benefactors

to the rich, or those whom they call people at their ease, are your persons of no consequence. I have known some of them, by the help of a little cunning, make delicious flatterers. They know the course of the town, and the general characters of persons; by this means they will sometimes tell the most agreeable falsehoods imaginable. They will acquaint you, that such a one of a quite contrary party said, 'That though you were engaged in different interests, yet he had the greatest respect for your good sense and address.' When one of these has a little cunning, he passes his time in the utmost satisfaction to himself and his friends; for his position is never to report or speak a displeasing thing to his friend. As for letting him go on in an error, he knows advice against them is the office of persons of greater talents and less discretion.

The Latin word for a flatterer, *assentator*, implies no more than a person that barely consents; and indeed such a one, if a man were able to purchase or maintain him, cannot be bought too dear. Such a one never contradicts you; but gains upon you, not by a fulsome way of commending you in broad terms, but liking whatever you propose or utter; at the same time, is ready to beg your pardon, and gainsay you, if you chance to speak ill of yourself. An old lady is very seldom without such a companion as this, who can recite the names of all her lovers, and the matches refused by her in the days when she minded such vanities, as she is pleased to call them, though she so much approves the mention of them. It is to be noted that a woman's flatterer is generally elder than herself; her years serving at once to recommend her

patroness's age, and to add weight to her complaisance in all other particulars.

We gentlemen of small fortunes are extremely necessitous in this particular. I have indeed one who smokes with me often; but his parts are so low, that all the incense he does me is to fill his pipe with me, and to be out at just as many whiffs as I take. This is all the praise or assent that he is capable of; yet there are more hours when I would rather be in his company than in that of the brightest man I know. It would be a hard matter to give an account of this inclination to be flattered; but if we go to the bottom of it, we shall find, that the pleasure in it is something like that of receiving money which we lay out: Every man thinks he has an estate of reputation, and is glad to see one that will bring any of it home to him. It is no matter how dirty a bag it is conveyed to him in, or by how clownish a messenger, so the money be good. All that we want, to be pleased with flattery, is to believe that the man is sincere who gives it us. It is by this one accident, that absurd creatures often outrun the most skilful in this art. Their want of ability is here an advantage; and their bluntness, as it is the seeming effect of sincerity, is the best cover to artifice.

Terence introduces a flatterer talking to a coxcomb, whom he cheats out of a livelihood; and a third person on the stage makes on him this pleasant remark, 'This fellow has an art of making fools madmen.' The love of flattery is, indeed, sometimes the weakness of a great mind; but you see it also in persons, who otherwise discover no manner of relish of anything above mere sensuality. These latter it

sometimes improves; but always debases the former. A fool is in himself the object of pity, until he is flattered. By the force of that, his stupidity is raised into affectation, and he becomes of dignity enough to be ridiculous. I remember a droll, that upon one's saying, 'The times are so ticklish, that there must great care be taken what one says in conversation'; answered with an air of surliness and honesty, 'If people will be free, let them be so in the manner that I am, who never abuse a man but to his face.' He had no reputation for saying dangerous truths; therefore when it was repeated, 'You abuse a man but to his face?' 'Yes,' says he, 'I flatter him.'

It is indeed the greatest of injuries to flatter any but the unhappy, or such as are displeased with themselves for some infirmity. In this latter case we have a member of our club, who, when Sir Jeffrey falls asleep, wakens him with snoring. This makes Sir Jeffrey hold up for some moments the longer, to see there are men younger than himself among us, who are more lethargic than he is.

When flattery is practised upon any other consideration, it is the most abject thing in nature; nay, I cannot think of any character below the flatterer, except he that envies him. You meet with fellows prepared to be as mean as possible in their condescensions and expressions; but they want persons and talents to rise up to such a baseness. As a coxcomb is a fool of parts, so is a flatterer a knave of parts.

The best of this order, that I know, is one who disguises it under a spirit of contradiction or reproof. He told an arrant driveller the other day, that he did not care for being in company with him, because he

heard he turned his absent friends into ridicule. And upon Lady Autumn's disputing with him about something that happened at the Revolution, he replied with a very angry tone, 'Pray, madam, give me leave to know more of a thing in which I was actually concerned, than you who were then in your nurse's arms.'

[*Tatler*, No. 208.

On Equanimity

It is an unreasonable thing some men expect of their acquaintance. They are ever complaining that they are out of order, or displeased, or they know not how, and are so far from letting that be a reason for retiring to their own homes, that they make it their argument for coming into company. What has anybody to do with accounts of a man's being indisposed but his physician? If a man laments in company, where the rest are in humour enough to enjoy themselves, he should not take it ill if a servant is ordered to present him with a porringer of caudle or posset-drink, by way of admonition that he go home to bed. That part of life which we ordinarily understand by the word conversation, is an indulgence to the sociable part of our make; and should incline us to bring our proportion of good-will or good-humour among the friends we meet with, and not to trouble them with relations which must of necessity oblige them to a real or feigned affliction. Cares, distresses, diseases, uneasinesses, and dislikes of our own, are by no means to be obtruded upon our friends. If we would consider how little of this vicissitude of motion and rest, which we call life, is spent with satisfaction, we should be more tender of our friends, than to bring them little

sorrows which do not belong to them. There is no real life, but cheerful life; therefore valetudinarians should be sworn before they enter into company, not to say a word of themselves till the meeting breaks up. It is not here pretended, that we should be always sitting with chaplets of flowers round our heads, or be crowned with roses, in order to make our entertainment agreeable to us; but if (as it is usually observed) they who resolve to be merry, seldom are so; it will be much more unlikely for us to be well pleased, if they are admitted who are always complaining they are sad. Whatever we do we should keep up the cheerfulness of our spirits, and never let them sink below an inclination at least to be well pleased: the way to this, is to keep our bodies in exercise, our minds at ease. That insipid state wherein neither are in vigour, is not to be accounted any part of our portion of being. When we are in the satisfaction of some innocent pleasure, or pursuit of some laudable design, we are in the possession of life, of human life. Fortune will give us disappointments enough, and nature is attended with infirmities enough, without our adding to the unhappy side of our account by our spleen or ill-humour. Poor Cottilus, among so many real evils, a chronical distemper and a narrow fortune, is never heard to complain. That equal spirit of his, which any man may have, that, like him, will conquer pride, vanity and affectation, and follow nature, is not to be broken, because it has no points to contend for. To be anxious for nothing but what nature demands as necessary, if it is not the way to an estate, is the way to what men aim at by getting an estate. This temper will preserve health in the body, as well as

tranquillity in the mind. Cottilus sees the world in a hurry, with the same scorn that a sober person sees a man drunk. Had he been contented with what he ought to have been, how could, says he, such a one have met with such a disappointment? If another had valued his mistress for what he ought to have loved her he had not been in her power. If her virtue had had a part of his passion, her levity had been his cure; she could not then have been false and amiable at the same time.

Since we cannot promise ourselves constant health, let us endeavour at such a temper as may be our best support in the decay of it. Uranius has arrived at that composure of soul, and wrought himself up to such a neglect of everything with which the generality of mankind is enchanted, that nothing but acute pains can give him disturbance, and against those too he will tell his intimate friends he has a secret which gives him present ease. Uranius is so thoroughly persuaded of another life, and endeavours so sincerely to secure an interest in it, that he looks upon pain but as a quickening of his pace to an home, where he shall be better provided for than in his present apartment. Instead of the melancholy views which others are apt to give themselves, he will tell you that he has forgot he is mortal, nor will he think of himself as such. He thinks at the time of his birth he entered into an eternal being; and the short article of death he will not allow an interruption of life, since that moment is not of half the duration as is his ordinary sleep. Thus is his being one uniform and consistent series of cheerful diversions and moderate cares, without fear or hope of futurity. Health to him is more than

pleasure to another man, and sickness less affecting to him than indisposition is to others.

I must confess, if one does not regard life after this manner, none but idiots can pass it away with any tolerable patience. Take a fine lady who is of a delicate frame, and you may observe from the hour she rises a certain weariness of all that passes about her. I know more than one who is much too nice to be quite alive. They are sick of such strange frightful people that they meet; one is so awkward, and another so disagreeable, that it looks like a penance to breathe the same air with them. You see this is so very true, that a great part of ceremony and good breeding among ladies turns upon their uneasiness; and I'll undertake, if the how-d'ye servants of our women were to make a weekly bill of sickness, as the parish clerks do of mortality, you would not find in an account of seven days, one in thirty that was not downright sick or indisposed, or but a very little better than she was, and so forth.

It is certain that to enjoy life and health as a constant feast, we should not think pleasure necessary, but, if possible, to arrive at an equality of mind. It is as mean to be overjoyed upon occasions of good fortune, as to be dejected in circumstances of distress. Laughter in one condition is as unmanly as weeping in the other. We should not form our minds to expect transport on every occasion, but know how to make it enjoyment to be out of pain. Ambition, envy, vagrant desire, or impertinent mirth will take up our minds, without we can possess ourselves in that sobriety of heart which is above all pleasures, and can be felt much better than described. But the ready

way, I believe, to the right enjoyment of life, is by a prospect towards another to have but a very mean opinion of it. A great author of our time has set this in an excellent light, when with a philosophic pity of human life, he spoke of it in his *Theory of the Earth*, in the following manner :—

'For what is this life but a circulation of little mean actions? We lie down and rise again, dress and undress, feed and wax hungry, work or play, and are weary, and then we lie down again, and the circle returns. We spend the day in trifles, and when the night comes we throw ourselves into the bed of folly, amongst dreams and broken thoughts, and wild imaginations. Our reason lies asleep by us, and we are for the time as arrant brutes as those that sleep in the stalls or in the field. Are not the capacities of man higher than these? And ought not his ambition and expectations to be greater? Let us be adventurers for another world: 'tis at least a fair and noble chance; and there is nothing in this worth our thoughts or our passions. If we should be disappointed, we are still no worse than the rest of our fellow-mortals; and if we succeed in our expectations, we are eternally happy.'

[*Spectator*, No. 143.

Confession of Faults

I OUGHT not to have neglected a request of one of my correspondents so long as I have; but I dare say I have given him time to add practice to profession. He sent me some time ago a bottle or two of excellent wine to drink the health of a gentleman, who had by the penny-post advertised him of an egregious error in his conduct. My correspondent received the obligation from an unknown hand with the candour which is natural to an ingenuous mind; and promises a contrary behaviour in that point for the future: he will offend his monitor with no more errors of that kind, but thanks him for his benevolence. This frank carriage makes me reflect upon the amiable atonement a man makes in an ingenuous acknowledgment of a fault: all such miscarriages as flow from inadvertency are more than repaid by it; for reason, though not concerned in the injury, employs all its force in the atonement. He that says, he did not design to disoblige you in such an action, does as much as if he should tell you, that though the circumstance which displeased was never in his thoughts, he has that respect for you, that he is unsatisfied till it is wholly out of yours. It must be confessed, that when an acknowledgment of offence is made out of poorness of spirit, and not conviction of heart, the circumstance is

quite different: but in the case of my correspondent, where both the notice is taken and the return made in private, the affair begins and ends with the highest grace on each side. To make the acknowledgment of a fault in the highest manner graceful, it is lucky when the circumstances of the offender place him above any ill consequences from the resentment of the person offended. A Dauphin of France, upon a review of the army, and a command of the king to alter the posture of it by a march of one of the wings, gave an improper order to an officer at the head of a brigade, who told his highness, he presumed he had not received the last orders, which were to move a contrary way. The prince, instead of taking the admonition which was delivered in a manner that accounted for his error with safety to his understanding, shook a cane at the officer; and with the return of opprobrious language, persisted in his own orders. The whole matter came necessarily before the king, who commanded his son, on foot, to lay his right hand on the gentleman's stirrup as he sat on horseback in sight of the whole army, and ask his pardon. When the prince touched his stirrup, and was going to speak, the officer with an incredible agility, threw himself on the earth, and kissed his feet.

The body is very little concerned in the pleasures or sufferings of souls truly great; and the reparation, when an honour was designed this soldier, appeared as much too great to be borne by his gratitude, as the injury was intolerable to his resentment.

When we turn our thoughts from these extraordinary occurrences in common life, we see an ingenuous kind of behaviour not only make up for faults committed, but in a manner expiate them in the

very commission. Thus many things wherein a man has pressed too far, he implicitly excuses, by owning, 'This is a trespass; you'll pardon my confidence; I am sensible I have no pretension to this favour,' and the like. But commend me to those gay fellows about town who are directly impudent, and make up for it no otherwise than by calling themselves such, and exulting in it. But this sort of carriage, which prompts a man against rules to urge what he has a mind to, is pardonable only when you sue for another. When you are confident in preference of yourself to others of equal merit, every man that loves virtue and modesty ought, in defence of those qualities, to oppose you. But, without considering the morality of the thing, let us at this time behold only the natural consequence of candour when we speak of ourselves.

The *Spectator* writes often in an elegant, often in an argumentative, and often in a sublime style, with equal success; but how would it hurt the reputed author of that paper to own, that of the most beautiful pieces under his title, he is barely the publisher? There is nothing but what a man really performs, can be an honour to him; what he takes more than he ought in the eye of the world, he loses in the conviction of his own heart; and a man must lose his consciousness, that is, his very self, before he can rejoice in any falsehood without inward mortification.

Who has not seen a very criminal at the bar, when his counsel and friends have done all that they could for him in vain, prevail upon the whole assembly to pity him, and his judge to recommend his case to the mercy of the throne, without offering anything new in his defence, but that he, whom before we wished

convicted, became so out of his own mouth, and took upon himself all the shame and sorrow we were just before preparing for him? The great opposition to this kind of candour, arises from the unjust idea people ordinarily have of what we call an high spirit. It is far from greatness of spirit to persist in the wrong in anything, nor is it a diminution of greatness of spirit to have been in the wrong: perfection is not the attribute of man, therefore he is not degraded by the acknowledgment of an imperfection: but it is the work of little minds to imitate the fortitude of great spirits on worthy occasions, by obstinacy in the wrong. This obstinacy prevails so far upon them, that they make it extend to the defence of faults in their very servants. It would swell this paper to too great a length, should I insert all the quarrels and debates which are now on foot in this town; where one party, and in some cases both, is sensible of being on the faulty side, and have not spirit enough to acknowledge it. Among the ladies the case is very common, for there are very few of them who know that it is to maintain a true and high spirit, to throw away from it all which itself disapproves, and to scorn so pitiful a shame, as that which disables the heart from acquiring a liberality of affections and sentiments. The candid mind, by acknowledging and discarding its faults, has reason and truth for the foundation of all its passions and desires, and consequently is happy and simple; the disingenuous spirit, by indulgence of one unacknowledged error, is entangled with an after-life of guilt, sorrow, and perplexity.

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